

2018 Farm Bill Items of Importance for ACA Members:

Title I – Commodities:

Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance (LIP, LFP, and ELAP):

The bill amends the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) to cover death or sale loss as a result of diseases that are caused or transmitted by a vector (**Examples of vector-borne diseases include Dengue fever, West Nile Virus, Lyme disease, and malaria.**) and that is not able to be controlled by vaccination or other acceptable management practices.

It also allows the Secretary to provide assistance for coverage under LIP for the death of unweaned livestock due to adverse weather, including those that have not been vaccinated, and makes available ELAP (Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm Raised Fish) funds for inspections of cattle tick fever, and removes the arbitrary payment limitation on ELAP assistance.

Livestock Forage Program (LFP) provides feed cost replacement for livestock producers in the event of forage loss due to severe drought.

Title II – Conservation:

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):

Conservation practices cost-share and soil rental rate payments are authorized, as well as haying and grazing, with conditions. Natural disasters may fulfill contractual land management requirements imposing conditions on haying and grazing, including restricting it to non-primary wildlife nesting season.

It provides for greater flexibility for haying and grazing on acres enrolled in CRP, with appropriate protections to maintain the conservation and wildlife value. The Secretary is directed to allow for these specified activities on both general and continuous acres, including on acres enrolled in practices like CP-25 rare and declining bird habitat.

Specifically, as part of the authority for the Secretary to allow emergency haying, grazing or other emergency use of forage outside the primary nesting season, the intent is for FSA to maintain the current procedures where the respective county committees have the ability to request such authorization from the respective state FSA committee when any part of the county is designated as a level "D2 Drought - Severe" or worse according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program Plan (EQIP):

EQIP received an increase in funding to \$2.025 billion by fiscal year 2023. However, the livestock carveout for EQIP went from 60 percent to 50 percent, including for grazing management practices, and the wildlife carveout increased from 5 percent to 10 percent.

This bill does include language that requires a CAFO plan of operation to include “progressive” implementation. The intent is for the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (“CNMP”) to remain a comprehensive and whole farm plan. However, during a particular EQIP contract period, it is not necessary for an existing facility with a CNMP to achieve every aspect of the CNMP all at once if doing so would be practically or economically infeasible. In such instances, progressive implementation should include an appropriate and realistic timeframe for the remaining implementation factors after the end of the contract period, including, if warranted, with additional EQIP assistance.

Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot:

The Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program is established with \$75 million for threat assessment, control methods, and land restoration. This money is mandatory funding.

Title III – Trade:

Priority Trade Promotion, Development, and Assistance:

This bill consolidates the current MAP (Market Access Program), FMD (Foreign Market Development), TASC (Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops), and EMP (Emerging Markets Program) programs under one Agricultural Trade Promotion and Facilitation section in the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978. The amendment provides a total of \$255 million in annual mandatory funding subject to allocation as follows: MAP not less than \$200 million annually; FMD not less than \$34.5 million annually; EMP not more than \$8 million annually; TASC at \$9 million annually; and the Priority Trade Fund at \$3.5 million annually to be distributed at the Secretary’s discretion. The request to USDA is that the unique functions of each program be maintained

Title VII – Research:

Agricultural Genome Initiative:

The bill reauthorizes the National Genetics Resources Program through 2023 while also authorizing appropriations of \$40 million for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

This language recognizes the importance of animal genomics research conducted and supported by USDA and strongly supports increased efforts in genomics research on agriculturally important animals to address critical goals including: (1) understanding how environment and production systems impact the growth and productivity of livestock, poultry, and aquaculture to help predict and improve performance under variable conditions; (2) leveraging livestock, poultry, and aquaculture genomic information with phenotypic and environmental data to assist in selection of superior genetics and improved management; (3) understanding gene function in production environments to improve livestock, poultry, and aquaculture performance; and (4) developing improved data analytics to enhance understanding of the biological function of genome sequences in livestock, poultry, and aquaculture.

Title VIII - Forestry:

Unfortunately, the Senate stripped from this final bill many of the House provisions within this title that would have addressed forest management and wildfire management that would have proved very helpful to our producers.

Title XI – Crop Insurance:

Treatment of Forage and Grazing:

Insurance for forage and grazing: Crops that can be both grazed and harvested—like winter wheat—are now eligible for separate policies on each intended use to provide livestock producers and pasture owners with additional insurance options. This provision allows producers to purchase separate policies for each intended use, as determined by the FCIC, and any indemnity paid under those policies for each intended use shall not be considered to be for the same loss.

Title XII: Miscellaneous:

Animal Disease Prevention and Management:

This bill provides programs and funding to ensure that USDA and its partners have the tools necessary to identify, diagnose, and respond to a potential outbreak, by addressing three critical components of a robust animal health protection system. The language provides \$300 million over 10 years to be allocated amongst these animal disease prevention and management programs in addition to authorizing supplemental funding through the appropriations process.

- National Animal Health Laboratory Network: Reauthorizes the National Animal Health Laboratory Network for rapid disease diagnosis.
- **National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank (FMD Vaccine Bank): Establishes a U.S.-only vaccine bank to respond to the accidental or intentional introduction of animal diseases—foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in particular.**
- National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program: Establishes the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program to leverage local, state, and national resources to prevent and respond to threats such as FMD, cattle fever tick, and more.

Mandatory Funding Provided:

\$300 Million total for all three Animal Disease Prevention and Management requests: over ten years (means there will be baseline for the next farm bill)

Discretionary Money Provided:

\$30 million authorization of appropriations for NAHLN through FY23. Such sums as necessary for Disease and Vaccine Bank through FY23.

Study on Livestock Dealer Statutory Trust:

This bill directs considerations under the study to include: how the establishment of a livestock dealer statutory trust would affect seller recovery in the event of a livestock dealer payment default; whether authorizing the Secretary to appoint an independent trustee under the livestock dealer statutory trust would improve seller recovery; and how the establishment of a livestock dealer statutory trust would affect the treatment of sellers of livestock as it relates to preferential transfer in bankruptcy. The study shall be completed 1 year after the date of enactment of the Act.

Regional Cattle and Carcass Grading Correlation and Training Centers:

The bill requires the Secretary to establish up to three regional centers to be known as “Cattle and Carcass Grading Correlation and Training Centers” to: (1) provide education and training for cattle and carcass beef graders of AMS, cattle producers, and other professionals involved in the reporting, delivery, and grading of feeder cattle, live cattle, and carcasses for the purpose of limiting the subjectivity in the application of beef grading standards; (2) provide producers with greater confidence in the price of the producers’ cattle; (3) provide investors with both long and short positions more assurance in the cattle delivery system; and (4) coordinate USDA and state and local resources. The language also requires that no funds are to be used for construction of any new facilities.

Improved Soil Moisture and Precipitation Monitoring:

The bill instructs the Secretary to coordinate with the Director of the National Drought Mitigation Center and the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to enhance the collection of data to improve the accuracy of the United States Drought Monitor, review the type of data utilized by the Drought Monitor and the geographic coverage of data sites and make improvements.