



For more information, please contact:

- ❖ Lorette Picciano, Executive Director, Rural Coalition, lpicciano@ruralco.org
- ❖ John Zippert, Chairperson, Rural Coalition, jzippert@aol.com
- ❖ Elliot Cordano, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, Rural Coalition, elliott@ruralco.org

Senate Agriculture Committee Releases New Framework for Bipartisan Farm Bill

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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This week, Senator Debbie Stabenow, Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, announced the [Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act](#). The proposed framework released includes over 100 bipartisan food and agriculture-related provisions that help to set the Farm Bill process back on track.

“We commend the Senate Agriculture Committee for this broad framework. It will jumpstart debate in order to deliver a bipartisan Farm Bill that serves a wide range of critical needs, including calming the climate, assuring adequate nutrition, and building prosperity and resilience,” said RC Chairperson John Zippert, also Director of Programs Emeritus for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives. “We fervently hope that as Congress moves towards passage of the Farm Bill, they continue to pay the same careful attention reflected in this package to the needs of farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and rural and tribal communities who have been underserved in the past.”

For the first time, this proposed package of legislation would benefit not only farmers, but also the 2.9 million farm workers who labor on American farms, sometimes in the most dangerous, abusive conditions. “Farm and food workers are essential to our agricultural system,” emphasized Alianza Nacional de Campesinas Executive Director, Mily Trevino Saucedo. “For this reason, we are pleased to see significant steps to include farm and food system workers in the Senate draft Farm Bill legislation, including improved reporting requirements, department liaisons, and advisory committees, among other changes,” said Trevino Saucedo, also Rural Coalition Board Secretary. “These provisions would dedicate a coordinator to both farm and food workers, ensure interagency collaboration between the USDA and grassroots farmworker organizations, improve safety and educational opportunities, and acknowledge the ongoing needs of these workers.”

“The farmers of the Rural Coalition will welcome the inclusion of the many provisions we have supported and worked towards,” said Rural Coalition Board Member Willie Booker, also the Director of the Rural Advancement Fund of the National Sharecroppers Fund, “including the modernization of farm credit, updating how base acres are calculated, and creating pathways to innovative new crop insurance programs that work for small scale producers operating diversified farms. We also welcome the inclusion of provisions that will enhance our local food systems, provide ongoing support for the groups providing technical assistance to small scale producers, make crucial investments in organic agriculture that will make organic practices and certification more accessible to farmers and consumers, and incorporate and safeguard critical investments in climate and conservation programs.”

The Rural Coalition remains cautiously optimistic that this package opens the door to a completion of a full and fair Farm Bill. We await the House Agriculture package, and commit to working with both the Senate and House Agriculture Committees to get this done.

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The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of farmers, farmworkers, indigenous, migrant and working people working together since 1978 toward a new society that values unity, hope, people, and the land. Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural members share the belief that rural communities everywhere can have a better future and that community-based organizations who have long served the needs of rural communities and people have a fundamental role in building that future. Investments in their work will provide important returns to our economy, our environment, and our society.