



## **Contact your Representative TODAY to urge passage of the 2012 Farm Bill**

September 14, 2012

**Status:** The 2012 Farm Bill has stalled in the House of Representatives, where House leadership has blocked the bill from being brought to the floor for a full vote. Congressman Bruce Braley (D-IA) filed a discharge petition on the 2012 Farm Bill on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. If the petition receives a majority of House signatures, leadership will be forced to hold an immediate vote on the bill. If enough signatures cannot be gathered, the bill will probably remain stalled in the House when legislators leave town after passing a continuing resolution to keep the government operating for another 6 months.

**Background:** The Senate passed their version of the 2012 Farm Bill on June 21<sup>st</sup>, cutting spending by roughly \$23 billion over the next ten years. The House version, which passed out of the House Agriculture Committee on July 11<sup>th</sup>, cuts \$35 billion over the next ten years. The Senate has proposed \$4.5 billion in cuts to SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, while the House has proposed \$16.5 billion in cuts to the same program. Both bills will end direct payment subsidies in favor of crop insurance programs. Even though both the Senate and the House Agriculture Committee have passed their versions of the bill, House leaders have been reluctant to address the trillion-dollar piece of legislation so close to the November elections.

**Problem:** Current provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill expire on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Farm Bill has an affect on nearly every sector of our economy, including trade, jobs, conservation and the food we put on our tables. One in every 12 jobs in the United States is rooted in agriculture, totaling nearly 23 million U.S. jobs. With an economy still struggling to recover, we cannot risk having even one of these jobs lost. The ongoing drought has made it especially tough for U.S. farmers to continue their mission of feeding the world, and the emergency provisions provided by the Farm Bill could help to ease that burden. Congress needs to pass the 2012 Farm Bill BEFORE current provisions expire.

**The Ask:** Contact your United States Representative to voice support for immediate consideration and passage of the 2012 Farm Bill. The contact information for your representative can be found at <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>.

Please feel free to copy and paste the letter below when emailing your representatives, having filled in the proper information for your representative.

**Sample Letter/Email:**

September **date**, 2012

The Honorable **first & last name of congressman/congresswoman**  
U.S. House of Representatives  
**Office number & name of office building**  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear **Congressman/Congresswoman last name:**

On behalf of the National Grange, the nation's oldest rural advocacy group, representing over 160,000 members in 2,100 communities across 40 states, I write today with respect to congressional consideration and passage of the 2012 Farm Bill. Acting in the best interest of American agriculture and the vital resources it produces and supports, we must encourage immediate consideration and debate of the 2012 Farm Bill. Provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill expire on September 30<sup>th</sup> and it is our strong desire to see a full, comprehensive, five-year Farm Bill taken up before the expiration of these vital programs.

The Farm Bill, despite its name, affects nearly every sector of our economy, including energy, conservation, trade, research and jobs. One in every 12 jobs in the United States is rooted in agriculture, totaling nearly 23 million U.S. jobs. With the economic uncertainty already engulfing our economy, we cannot afford to see these jobs lost. In addition, by cutting billions from the costs of both bills, we feel the Senate and House Agriculture Committees have recognized the need to get our fiscal house in order.

An extension of current provisions would not serve the best interests of American agriculture and would only delay these problems for a future date. In the alternative, we urge House leadership to bring the 2012 Farm Bill to the floor for a full vote. Our nation's farmers and ranchers deserve to have their voices heard and their needs met today, not six months from now.

The National Grange believes the ultimate goal of Farm Bill programs and provisions should be to ensure that American agriculture receives the vital resources it requires to continue feeding our nation and the world. With a global population expected to surpass 9 billion by 2050, we cannot afford to delay access to these resources. We urge House leadership to begin deliberations and debate on the 2012 Farm Bill by bringing it to the House floor for a full vote. Thank you for the opportunity to make comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

**Your name**  
**Your Grange name & number**

If you have any questions or comments regarding this Action Alert, please contact National Grange Legislative Director Grace Boatright at [gboatright@nationalgrange.org](mailto:gboatright@nationalgrange.org); or by phone 1-888-4GRANGE. Ext. 114.

Thank you for your dedication to this important issue.