



FAMILY FARMERS, the FARM CRISIS, and the FUTURE OF FOOD and FARM POLICY 2026 SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

Family farmers and ranchers are facing immense financial pressure that is increasingly reminiscent of the 1980s farm crisis. Several years of record-high input costs and low commodity prices, combined with recent trade disruptions that have upended export markets and increased costs at home, are pushing many farmers and ranchers to the economic brink. We find ourselves again at the precipice of the next era of agricultural policy.

NFU calls on Congress to pass comprehensive agricultural legislation that not only addresses a safety net for agricultural products, but supports communities, builds jobs, and establishes long term markets. By taking a holistic approach to sustaining agricultural communities, agricultural policy can promote more resiliency and increase honest economic wealth for our communities.

We support the following:

Keeping Farmers on the Land

- Immediate moratorium on foreclosure of farm loans and comprehensive farm credit reform
- Passage of a new law to address market consolidation in our communities and decentralize production, processing, and marketing
- Increase of voluntary conservation programs and eligible acres to convert agricultural land to a perennial cover
- Ensuring farmers and ranchers have access to healthcare in their area and affordable health insurance
- Technical assistance for training, farm transition, and business planning for the next generation
- Government programs and policies that assist in agricultural land identification and transition to nonfamilial beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Tax policies that favor operator ownership and incentivize land transfer to beginning farmers over investor ownership.
- The creation of a comprehensive debt restructuring initiative, modeled after the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP).

Creating Competitive Markets

- Streamlined regulations for the establishment of meat processing facilities for meat sales
- Facilitation of local and regional food procurement and distribution, specifically for institutions, food hubs, food cooperatives, and independent grocery stores
- Global trade agreements to provide international markets for US commodities
- Global climate agreement which prioritizes the use of climate resilient agricultural products

- Federal prioritization of purchasing culturally appropriate food based on locality and regionality rather than solely on lowest cost
- Farm programs and policies which encourage and incentivize more diverse crop production and the inclusion of livestock in operations
- Increase in federal purchase of local food for nutrition assistance, and 'Food is Medicine' programs.

Safety Net for Modern Agriculture

- Economic assistance for farmers and ranchers, which provides the most complete support for family sized agricultural operations in times of economic distress.
- Programs that promote diverse communities of farmers and ranchers and do not promote the consolidation of agricultural products or support infrastructure including machinery, financing, and processing.

National Farmers Union is uniquely positioned to lead a cross industry, multi-commodity, and conservation minded coalition to come to real solutions for our agricultural communities. We as National Farmers Union must take on the responsibilities of being engaged in the democratic process from the local to the national level.