



May 26, 2026

The Honorable John Boozman  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
and Forestry  
United States Senate

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
and Forestry  
United States Senate

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, Majority Leader Thune, and Minority Leader Schumer,

On behalf of National Farmers Union (NFU), America's family farm organization, I respectfully request that you enact urgently needed farm safety net reforms this year.

Farmers Union members and our communities continue to face significant economic headwinds. Input costs are rising as commodity prices remain low, squeezing already thin margins. Farm bankruptcies increased by 46 percent from 2024 to 2025 and farm debt has reached record high levels. The war in Iran adds uncertainty to fertilizer and fuel markets, further elevating the prices of critical inputs. At the same time, recent trade disputes have undercut demand for our commodities abroad and created significant price volatility, which compounds other economic challenges. Many regions are also experiencing severe drought, and dry conditions could result in a very challenging crop year. Taken together, these pressures threaten the viability of family farms today and reduce opportunities for the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

We appreciate the incremental improvements to farm policies in recent years. Congress increased reference prices and added base acres in the 2025 budget reconciliation bill. These changes will benefit some row crop farmers, although they won't see greater support levels until later this year. The Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program provided \$12 billion in temporary aid to the farm economy. And the farm bill recently advanced by the House Agriculture Committee offers some important updates and authorizations, if ultimately enacted.

However, none of these recent changes or proposals meet the magnitude of the crisis facing our farms and ranches. We need substantial and lasting changes to farm policy that help all family farmers and ranchers. Congress must establish true safety nets that move away from ad hoc assistance and respond to increasing production costs while providing stability to volatile markets. With more than \$100 billion over the last ten years spent on

agricultural emergency aid and year-to-year disaster assistance programs, major reforms are necessary to better serve family farmers and ranchers as well as taxpayers. Strengthening and modernizing core farm programs to both reflect current economic challenges and be responsive to future shocks, as well as creating a structure and funding stream to quickly and consistently provide disaster assistance, would provide farmers with more predictable risk management tools, reduce uncertainty, and lessen the need for repeated emergency interventions.

Family farmers and ranchers are highly efficient producers of crops and livestock, but effective agricultural policy should ensure that low prices do not undermine our financial security. We ask lawmakers to take a closer look at solutions like the Inventory Management Soil Enhancement Tool (IMSET), a policy proposal Farmers Union developed and supports.

IMSET is a voluntary, incentive-based conservation and farm safety net program concept that works alongside existing or future programs. IMSET has two core purposes: to help us conserve our soil and to protect farm income when agricultural markets falter. By voluntarily enrolling in IMSET, farmers would have an additional opportunity and incentive to implement soil health practices in exchange for stronger risk management options. This policy concept can address important conservation needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Unless policymakers implement IMSET or a similar tool to better manage market lows, American farmers will continue to try to produce their way out of low prices, only to find themselves in a race to the bottom. A system that only supports greater production will continue to undermine farm profitability and economic viability.

Lawmakers must take decisive action to correct decades of policy choices that favored consolidation over competition and short-term fixes over long-term stability. I urge you to act boldly and prioritize a more effective farm safety net in further legislation this year—because the future of family farming is on the line.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Larew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Rob Larew  
President