



TEAM: FOOD & AGRICULTURE

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SUBJECT: A RESILIENT FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SYSTEM- FARM BILL 2026

APPENDIX:

“A new farm bill is long overdue, and the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 is an important step forward in providing certainty to our farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.” (House Committee on Agriculture Chairman Glenn “GT” Thompson)

The impacts of H.R. 1 will be deeply felt across the Capital Region, both in the regional economy and across communities. As one economic indicator, estimates of SNAP/CalFresh benefits coming to California in 2022 included over \$343 million for District 1 (LaMalfa), \$140 million for District 3 (Kiley), \$190 million for District 4 (Thompson), \$236 million for District 5 (McClintock), \$336 million for District 6 (Bera), and \$338 million in District 7 (Matsui) (California Budget and Policy Center). These benefits not only reduce hunger and nutritional insecurity, but they also provide for a huge investment in our food economy.

Other Farm Bill Priorities include:

- Expand and codify funding for the one-time Regional Food System Infrastructure (RFSI) Program funded by USDA in 2024, which expanded domestic market opportunities for small-and-medium sized farms and agri-businesses by strengthening the middle of the supply chain. This program was very successful, and future funding should invest in transportation, aggregation, cold storage and processing (including for food hubs) facilities and equipment to close the gap between farm production and distribution to reach new markets, including institutions.
- Clarify new Food Restriction Waivers and Retailer Compliance for SNAP, as requested by the National Grocers Association and National Association of

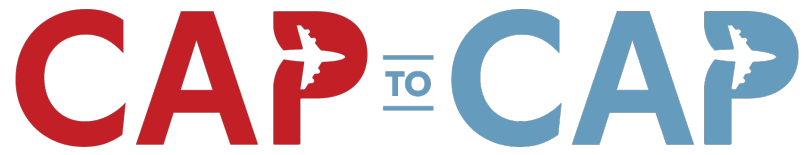


Convenience Stores (January 7, 2026). This includes guidance and appropriate safe-harbor protections for SNAP-authorized retailers, and clarification on the enforcement framework.

- Codify the Regional Food Business Center program which was administered by USDA and funded twelve regional centers across the U.S. to increase opportunities for small-to-mid-sized farmers and strengthen regional food systems. The Program is winding down early but has been very successful. In the four state Southwest region, the Center is led by University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, California Dept. of Food and Agriculture and Valley Vision. More than \$1.5 million in direct business builder grants were distributed to more than 70 farmers and food producers and more than 2,600 were recipients of technical assistance, resulting in increased sales and revenues, new market channels, etc. Codification in the Farm Bill would help leverage other funding such as philanthropy to continue this very successful model.

More detail on legislation support requested in Issue Paper Requested Actions:

- Support the bi-partisan ([H.R. 4782](#)) Local Farmers Feeding our Communities Act (LFFC) of 2025, as noted above. The LFFC Act creates a pathway for the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to enter into cooperative agreements with states and tribal governments to purchase unprocessed or minimally processed local food from small, mid-sized, beginning, or veteran fishers, farmers, and ranchers to distribute to organizations. These agreements will offer consistent purchasing opportunities for evolving local food distribution networks. The LFFC Act would establish and expand relationships between local producers and food distribution networks to create new market opportunities for farmers and improve community food security.
- Support S. 3528 PROTEIN (Producing Real Opportunities for Technology and Entrepreneurs Investing in Nutrition Act), as noted above. This bill would direct more than \$500 million in federal support over the next five years toward research and development of protein innovation, with support for workforce development and domestic manufacturing capacity and positioning the United States as a global leader. The Capital Region has valuable assets through UC Davis and innovative emerging start-ups and growth companies that are focused



on plant-based and other protein alternatives and biomanufacturing.

Resources:

National Association of State Depts. of Agriculture, Policy Issue Paper, February 2026; other sources include CA Dept. of Food and Agriculture Farm Bill priorities, the University of California, and many other resources.