



May 21, 2024

The Honorable Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Scott, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture:

As the Committee on Agriculture approaches the legislative markup for the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024, the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) appreciates your work to support America's farmers, rural communities, and consumers through the farm bill.

As a grassroots-led association, NCGA and our affiliated state associations have worked with grower leaders from across the country to advocate for strategic investments and policy enhancements for the 2024 farm bill. NCGA's farm bill recommendations seek to make existing USDA programs more effective, efficient, and responsive. Many of these recommendations are reflected in the proposed legislation and would be an improvement upon existing programs for corn growers across the country.

Corn growers provide the following feedback on the Farm, Food, and National Security Act. As laid out in Congressional testimony last year, the values, objectives, and areas of emphasis for corn growers are best summarized in our key principles: protecting federal crop insurance; strengthening the producer safety net; bolstering U.S. international market development efforts; supporting voluntary conservation programs, and championing initiatives important to rural America.

Protecting federal crop insurance

With crop insurance as the number one farm bill priority for corn growers, NCGA supports the inclusion of expanded support for beginning and veteran farmers and ranchers in Section 11008 and improvements to the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) via Section 11005. These provisions will help increase the affordability of federal crop insurance coverage for some producers. As the legislative process continues, corn growers will continue to oppose efforts to cut crop insurance programs or restrict producer accessibility to risk management tools.

Bolstering U.S. international market development efforts

In the trade title, NCGA strongly supports the doubling of mandatory funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program found in Section 3201. Corn exports are important for U.S. corn farmers' income. Dynamic USDA trade programs boost U.S. agricultural exports, are vital to the prosperity of U.S. agriculture and related business, increase the value of agriculture exports, and provide a high value of return on the investments.

NATIONAL OFFICE: MAIL TO: P.O. BOX 407 | CHESTERFIELD, MO 63006
632 CEPI DR. CHESTERFIELD, MO 63005 | 636-733-9004

WASHINGTON DC: 20 F STREET NW, SUITE 900, WASHINGTON, DC 20001 | 202-628-7001



Strengthening the producer safety net

Corn growers provided several recommendations to strengthen the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) commodity programs. NCGA strongly supports the updates to the ARC county program in Section 1105, including increasing the coverage level and increasing the maximum payment rate. The proposed changes would provide producers with more responsive and more adequate assistance in times of revenue losses, particularly in areas experiencing disasters.

For the PLC program, corn growers appreciate the increase in the statutory reference price for corn from \$3.70 to \$4.10, set in Section 1101. Corn growers also appreciate the retention of the effective reference price “escalator.” In combination, these provisions would enhance risk protection for corn growers who value the PLC program, particularly during periods of deep and sustained lower than average commodity prices.

However, corn growers have concerns with the application, imbalance, and potential impacts of the proposed changes to the PLC program. NCGA is particularly concerned with the new floor price for corn contained in Section 1201. The “special rule for seed cotton and corn” would set a floor price of \$3.30 for corn and create a new gap in price coverage if the national marketing year average prices for corn were severely depressed. While a similar provision has previously applied to one other covered commodity, the legislation would unfairly expand the concept only to corn growers.

With base acres underpinning the eligibility for the ARC and PLC commodity programs, corn growers appreciate that Section 1102 provides a one-time opportunity to add base acres. While producers will be pleased that farms across the country will be able to sign up to have additional acres eligible for these programs, NCGA has concerns that the legislation would not provide any meaningful reforms or updates to existing base acres. We will continue to advocate for policies to ensure that all base acres, program eligibility, and payments better reflect growers’ recent planting history.

NCGA also supports the increase in the marketing assistance loan rate for corn via Section 1201 and recognizes the proposed legislation would make additional improvements to the administration of commodity programs through adjustments to payment limitations in Sections 1603 and 1604.

Supporting voluntary conservation programs

Corn growers are committed to implementing successful conservation practices on their farms. NCGA supports investments into USDA working lands conservation programs, which help corn growers continue to be good stewards of the land and play an important role in advancing the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices.

NCGA strongly supports the provisions in Section 2503, delivery of technical assistance, which includes a process for the establishment of interim and new conservation practice standards. This process will help to speed the development and adoption of innovative conservation practices so that corn farmers have timely access to the latest, proven technologies and practices.

NATIONAL OFFICE: MAIL TO: P.O. BOX 407 | CHESTERFIELD, MO 63006
632 CEPI DR. CHESTERFIELD, MO 63005 | 636-733-9004

WASHINGTON DC: 20 F STREET NW, SUITE 900, WASHINGTON, DC 20001 | 202-628-7001



Championing initiatives important to rural America

The farm bill includes many programs and policies important to corn growers including the biobased economy, energy, credit, agricultural research, and rural development. NCGA supports provisions in the proposed legislation that would invest in biofuels infrastructure, clearly define sustainable aviation fuel, and support the adoption of precision technology. NCGA also supports Section 10204, uniformity of pesticide labeling requirements, which affirms FIFRA gives the EPA the exclusive authority to determine labeling and packaging requirements, and those labels must reflect EPA's scientific conclusions.

Corn growers appreciate the leadership of Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Scott, and Members of the Committee in crafting and negotiating many of the provisions of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024. NCGA and our members would like to see this process move forward in a bipartisan manner and for a farm bill to be signed into law this year. We stand ready to provide additional feedback to the Agriculture Committees and all Members of Congress as the legislative process moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harold Wolle, Jr." in a cursive script.

Harold Wolle, Jr.
President
National Corn Growers Association

CC: Members of the House Committee on Agriculture