

Farm Bill Priorities

The Farm Bill is an opportunity to improve health care, build rural community economic development, and enhance the overall quality of life in rural communities.

SUPPORT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The USDA Rural Development title supports the backbone of rural communities, from hospitals to child care facilities. Congress must leverage key programs such as the **Community Facilities Loan & Grant Programs** to provide rural hospitals necessary capital and the strengthen economic health of rural areas.

END RURAL FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity affects 15.9% of rural households, contributing to worse health outcomes for rural residents. Congress must reauthorize and bolster food security programs to help support rural households that need access to key nutrition programs.

BUILD RURAL BROADBAND CAPACITY

Broadband access is critical for utilizing telehealth services. Increase support for **Community Connect, ReConnect, Rural Broadband, and Distance Learning & Telemedicine programs** to ensure rural America stays connected.

ELEVATE RURAL HEALTH

Continue support for **USDA's Rural Health Liaison** as a critical voice. Reauthorize the **Rural EMS & Equipment Assistance Program**. Congress must also address farmer behavioral health by supporting the **Farm & Ranch Stress Assistance Network** and authorizing a designated agricultural worker mental health crisis hotline.

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Pass the following legislation as part of the 2026 Farm Bill package

S. 1282/H.R. 1417: Rural Healthcare Facilities

Technical Assistance Act

*Sens. Rounds (R-SD) & Welch (D-VT)
Reps. Jackson (R-TX) & Tokuda (D-HI)*

Authorizes and expands the USDA Hospital Technical Assistance Program to identify and address facility needs to improve financial performance and quality outcomes.

S. 3084/H.R. 3119: ReConnecting Rural America Act

*Sens. Marshall (R-KS), Welch (D-VT)
Rep. Nunn (R-IA) & Vasquez (D-NM)*

Permanently authorizes the ReConnect Program, which deploys broadband to underserved rural communities, prioritizing unserved, remote rural communities, requiring minimum broadband speeds, and supporting grant funding for tribal areas and colonias.

H.R. 6070: Community Connect Grant Program Act

Rep. Stansbury (D-NM)

Reauthorizes the Community Connect Grant Program, which helps connect rural communities to broadband where service does not currently exist.

H.R. 1246: Investing in Rural America Act

*Reps. Fischbach (R-MN), Davis (D-NC) &
Finstad (R-MN)*

Codifies farm credit institutions' ability to finance essential rural facilities, including hospitals, in partnership with local lenders and the Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program.

S. 2282/H.R. 4400: Farmers First Act

*Sens. Baldwin (D-WI) & Ernst (R-IA)
Reps. Feenstra (R-IA) & Craig (D-MN)*

Reauthorizes the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network at \$15 million to provide agricultural communities with mental health resources.

H.R. 1906: Rural Wellness Act

Reps. Budzinski (D-IL) & Finstad (R-MN)

Prioritizes behavioral health projects in certain Rural Development grant programs and extends current substance use set-asides and prioritized selection.

H.R. 290: Rural Telehealth and Education Enhancement Act

Reps. Langworthy (R-NY) & Pingree (D-ME)

Reauthorizes the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program, which provides grants to support the use of telecommunications technology by students, teachers, medical professionals, and rural residents.

National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act (H.R. 5246 in 118th Congress)

Reps. Caraveo (D-CO) & Gonzales (R-TX)

Creates a 24/7 national crisis hotline tailored to support the mental health needs of farmers, ranchers, farm workers, and families by providing suicide crisis intervention, emotional support, information, and mental health and substance use disorder support services.