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## **Lucas Praises House Passage of Farm Bill Conference Report**

JAN 29, 2014 | Issues: **Farm Bill**

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Tamara Hinton, 202.225.0184

**[tamara.hinton@mail.house.gov](mailto:tamara.hinton@mail.house.gov)**

WASHINGTON – Chairman Frank Lucas issued the following statement today after the U.S. House of Representatives passed the **Agricultural Act of 2014** by a vote of 251-166.

**"I am pleased a majority of my House colleagues joined me in supporting a five-year, comprehensive farm bill. I appreciate the efforts of everyone who helped get us here. This is legislation we can all be proud of because it fulfills the expectations the American people have of us. They expect us to work together to find ways to reduce the cost of the federal government. The Agricultural Act contributes major savings to deficit reduction, significant reforms to policy, and yet still provides a safety net not only for the production of American food and fiber, but also to ensure our fellow citizens have enough food to eat. I am hopeful this legislation will enjoy the same success when the Senate considers it, and I encourage the president to sign it quickly into law,"** said Chairman Frank Lucas.

More information, including the text of the legislation, can be found at this **[link](#)**.

### **Farm Policy Reforms**

*The Agricultural Act of 2014 includes the most significant reduction to farm*

*policy spending in history by improving agricultural programs.*

- Repeals Direct Payments and limits producers to risk management tools that offer protection when they suffer significant losses.
- Limits on payments are reduced, eligibility rules are tightened, and means tests are streamlined to make farm programs more accountable.
- Strengthens crop insurance, a successful public/private partnership that ensures farmers invest in their own risk management.
- Provides historic reforms to dairy policy by repealing outdated and ineffective dairy programs. Offers producers a new, voluntary, margin protection program without imposing government-mandated supply controls.
- Supports small businesses and beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital.

Food Stamp Reforms

*The Agricultural Act of 2014 makes the first reforms to the food stamp program since the welfare reforms of 1996 while maintaining critical food assistance to families in need.*

- Closes the “heat-and-eat” loophole that artificially increases benefit levels when states provide nominal LIHEAP assistance.
- Establishes a 10-state pilot to empower states to engage able-bodied adults in mandatory work programs.
- Prohibits USDA from engaging in SNAP recruitment activities, and advertising SNAP on TV, radio, billboards and through foreign governments.
- Ensures illegal immigrants, lottery winners, traditional college students, and the deceased do not receive benefits.

- Ensures SNAP recipients are not receiving benefits in multiple states.
- Prevents abuses such as water dumping to exchange bottles for cash.
- Demands outcomes from existing employment and training programs.
- Prohibits states from manipulating SNAP benefit levels by eliminating medical marijuana as an allowable medical expense.
- Allows states to pursue retailer fraud through a pilot investigation program and crack down on trafficking through data mining, terminal ID, and other measures.
- Increases assistance for food banks.

#### Additional Reforms & Regulatory Relief

*The Agricultural Act of 2014 includes multiple regulatory relief provisions benefitting agricultural and forestry industries.*

- Consolidates 23 duplicative and overlapping conservation programs into 13.
- Provides one year of full funding for the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which provides funding for vital services in communities containing federal lands.
- Provides certainty to the forest products industry by clarifying that forest roads and related silvicultural activities should not be treated as a point source under the Clean Water Act.
- Creates a permanent subcommittee within the EPA Science Advisory Board to conduct peer review of EPA actions that would negatively impact agriculture.
- Enhances coordination between USDA, EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) regarding the conflict between laws governing

pesticide use and the Endangered Species Act.

- Enhances coordination between USDA and the U.S. FWS regarding actions taken to manage the lesser prairie chicken.
- Eliminates duplicative reporting requirements for seed importers; requires improved economic analysis of FDA regulations.

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## **Lucas: Agricultural Act of 2014 Marks a New Era for Farm & Food Policy**

FEB 7, 2014 | Issues: **Farm Bill**

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Tamara Hinton, 202.225.0184

**[tamara.hinton@mail.house.gov](mailto:tamara.hinton@mail.house.gov)**

WASHINGTON – Chairman Frank Lucas issued the following statement today after President Obama signed the **Agricultural Act of 2014** into law.

**"The amazing reality about farm bills is that they reflect the times in which we live. They are reviewed, written, debated, and reauthorized nearly every five years. Today our concerns are rightly placed on reducing the size and cost of the federal government. With the president signing the Agricultural Act of 2014 into law, we mark a new era of farm and food policy that values saving money, reforming or repealing government programs, and yet still providing an effective safety net for the production of our national food supply and for those Americans who are struggling.**

**"I am pleased we have a new farm bill in place to provide certainty for the next five years to America's farmers, ranchers, and consumers, and I appreciate the efforts of everyone who helped make it possible,"** said Chairman Frank Lucas.

The U.S. House of Representatives **passed** the conference report on January 29 by a vote of 251-166. The U.S. Senate **passed** it on February 4 with 68-32 vote.

**Farm Policy Reforms**

*The Agricultural Act of 2014 includes the most significant reduction to farm policy spending in history by improving agricultural programs.*

- Repeals Direct Payments and limits producers to risk management tools that offer protection when they suffer significant losses.
- Limits on payments are reduced, eligibility rules are tightened, and means tests are streamlined to make farm programs more accountable.
- Strengthens crop insurance, a successful public/private partnership that ensures farmers invest in their own risk management.
- Provides historic reforms to dairy policy by repealing outdated and ineffective dairy programs. Offers producers a new, voluntary, margin protection program without imposing government-mandated supply controls.
- Supports small businesses and beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital.

### Food Stamp Reforms

*The Agricultural Act of 2014 makes the first reforms to the food stamp program since the welfare reforms of 1996 while maintaining critical food assistance to families in need.*

- Closes the “heat-and-eat” loophole that artificially increases benefit levels when states provide nominal LIHEAP assistance.
- Establishes a 10-state pilot to empower states to engage able-bodied adults in mandatory work programs.
- Prohibits USDA from engaging in SNAP recruitment activities, and advertising SNAP on TV, radio, billboards and through foreign governments.
- Ensures illegal immigrants, lottery winners, traditional college students,

and the deceased do not receive benefits.

- Ensures SNAP recipients are not receiving benefits in multiple states.
- Prevents abuses such as water dumping to exchange bottles for cash.
- Demands outcomes from existing employment and training programs.
- Prohibits states from manipulating SNAP benefit levels by eliminating medical marijuana as an allowable medical expense.
- Allows states to pursue retailer fraud through a pilot investigation program and crack down on trafficking through data mining, terminal ID, and other measures.
- Increases assistance for food banks.

#### Additional Reforms & Regulatory Relief

*The Agricultural Act of 2014 includes multiple regulatory relief provisions benefitting agricultural and forestry industries.*

- Consolidates 23 duplicative and overlapping conservation programs into 13.
- Provides one year of full funding for the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which provides funding for vital services in communities containing federal lands.
- Provides certainty to the forest products industry by clarifying that forest roads and related silvicultural activities should not be treated as a point source under the Clean Water Act.
- Creates a permanent subcommittee within the EPA Science Advisory Board to conduct peer review of EPA actions that would negatively impact agriculture.
- Enhances coordination between USDA, EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service (FWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) regarding the conflict between laws governing pesticide use and the Endangered Species Act.

- Enhances coordination between USDA and the U.S. FWS regarding actions taken to manage the lesser prairie chicken.
- Eliminates duplicative reporting requirements for seed importers; requires improved economic analysis of FDA regulations.

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# HOUSE - SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

## AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014

### **HIGHLIGHTS:**

➔ Saves taxpayers \$23 billion in mandatory federal spending.

➔ Includes the most significant reduction to farm policy spending in history by improving agricultural programs.

➔ Makes the first reforms to SNAP (food stamps program) since the welfare reforms of 1996 while maintaining critical food assistance to families in need.

➔ Repeals or consolidates nearly 100 programs administered by USDA, including Direct Payments to farmers.

➔ Reduces regulatory barriers for job creators while making critical investments in land stewardship, rural electric, water, and other infrastructure needs that grow job capacity.

➔ Provides certainty to America's farmers, ranchers, and consumers by adopting a five-year farm bill.

### **REFORMS FARM POLICY**

- Repeals Direct Payments and limits producers to risk management tools that offer protection when they suffer significant losses.
- Limits on payments are reduced, eligibility rules are tightened, and means tests are streamlined to make farm programs more accountable.
- Strengthens crop insurance, a successful public/private partnership that ensures farmers invest in their own risk management.
- Provides historic reforms to dairy policy by repealing outdated and ineffective dairy programs. Offers producers a new, voluntary, margin protection program without imposing government-mandated supply controls.
- Reauthorizes and strengthens livestock disaster assistance.
- Supports small businesses and beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital.

### **REFORMS FOOD STAMPS**

- Closes the "heat-and-eat" loophole that artificially increases benefit levels when states provide nominal LIHEAP assistance.
- Establishes a 10-state pilot to empower states to engage able-bodied adults in mandatory work programs.
- Prohibits USDA from engaging in SNAP recruitment activities, and advertising SNAP on TV, radio, billboards & through foreign governments.
- Ensures illegal immigrants, lottery winners, traditional college students, and the deceased do not receive benefits.
- Ensures SNAP recipients are not receiving benefits in multiple states.
- Prevents abuses such as water dumping to exchange bottles for cash.
- Demands outcomes from existing employment and training programs.
- Prohibits states from manipulating SNAP benefit levels by eliminating medical marijuana as an allowable medical expense.
- Allows states to pursue retailer fraud through a pilot investigation program and crack down on trafficking through data mining, terminal ID, and other measures.
- Increases assistance for food banks.

### **ADDITIONAL REFORMS & REGULATORY RELIEF**

- Consolidates 23 duplicative and overlapping conservation programs into 13.
- Provides one year of full funding for the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which provides funding for vital services in communities containing federal lands.
- Provides certainty to forest products industry by clarifying that forest roads should not be treated as a point source under the Clean Water Act.
- Creates a permanent subcommittee within the EPA Science Advisory Board to conduct peer review of EPA actions that would negatively impact agriculture.
- Eliminates duplicative reporting requirements for seed importers; requires improved economic analysis of FDA regulations.
- Fully funds specialty crop industry priorities such as Specialty Crop Block Grants.

PROVIDED BY THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRANK D. LUCAS