



On September 30, 2018, the Agricultural Act of 2014, more commonly known as the 2014 Farm Bill, is set to expire. Plans to replace the Farm Bill are underway, being led by Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI-D). This federal bill was passed with bipartisan support in 2014 and has seen many successes for the agricultural industry, especially so in Michigan where agriculture is our second largest source of jobs. The bill essentially works as a series of grants that create initiatives for local food access, clean drinking water, and financial security for farmers. The 2014 bill had more than 100 programs fostering growth across all divisions of the agricultural industry, with the following being a few successes in our own state:

- Saw the most significant investment in conservation in decades through programs that facilitated local partnerships to match government funding with private resources towards clean water initiatives for farmers in the Great Lakes
- Supported farmers markets
- Created new opportunities to export Michigan products, assisting farmers in global market
- Protected specialty crop producers from risk such as weather disasters
- Rural development initiatives that aided in establishing new infrastructure like high-speed internet and improved drinking water systems

- Strengthened critical research, data, risk management, and transition tools for organics and other value-added agriculture products
- Created incentives for Michigan families to buy fruits and vegetables from farmers
- Provided training and access to capital to help new farmers get started
- Initiatives for veterans to start agribusinesses
- Created jobs in bio-based manufacturing by using ag products to replace petroleum based plastics
- Lead innovation in bio-energy and renewable energy production
- Supported ag-research like that being done at MSU

The 2018 bill has already gone through House and Senate hearings, and advocates have begun field hearings in order to formulate the new policy. So far there has been a push to keep Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the new version, which has been seen as a success for food access. 80% of the bill is set to be allocated to food assistance and nutrition programs such as this. Some concern has been voiced over federal cuts to safety-nets such as federal crop insurance subsidies that reduce risk for farmers.

Senator Stabenow will be holding a field hearing along with Chairman, Senator Pat Roberts from Kansas, at MSU Saginaw Valley Research Extension Center in Frankenmuth at 10 AM, Saturday May 6th. To RSVP, email your name and organization to RSVP@ag.senate.gov. You can also submit your comments in advance at www.agriculture.senate.gov/farm-bill-input.