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Senate releases farm bill draft as emergency aid proposal emerges

June 29, 2026



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Last week, the Senate Agriculture Committee released a farm bill draft that omits several controversial provisions and is unlikely to gain bipartisan support in its current form. In addition, President Trump submitted a proposed emergency funding package that includes billions in direct aid for farmers, reflecting ongoing economic challenges in the agricultural sector.

Senate releases farm bill discussion draft

The Senate Agriculture Committee released its discussion draft text of the farm bill on June 23. As expected, the bill excluded a number of controversial provisions, including year-round E15, disaster assistance for farmers, and preemption of Prop 12. Also excluded was the two-year delay to the SNAP cost-share that has long been seen as the "entry fee" for Democratic votes for the bill.

The discussion draft includes several provisions that impact conservation and research. The bill strengthens the Technical Service Provider program by expanding eligible entities and expertise while clarifying oversight and reimbursement. It also reauthorizes key agricultural research programs; expands priorities to include areas such as PFAS, AI, biochar, and workforce development; and removes AGARDA's pilot status to broaden its authority and funding flexibility. Notably, SARE and FFAR were not included in the draft.

As such, as the bill stands, it would not garner bipartisan support, making anything more than a Committee markup impossible in the Senate, where a 60-vote threshold is required. On June 22 in a briefing, Republican staff noted that they are open to an amendment process, but at this point, the path forward remains unclear.

Trump proposes emergency supplemental

On June 24, President Trump submitted a nearly $88 billion emergency supplemental request to Congress. Its largely focused on defense and global crises but includes significant agricultural provisions amid continued economic stress in the farming community. The package proposes $11.1 billion in direct farm assistance for producers facing elevated input costs, tariff-related market disruptions, and weather impacts. Senate farm-state Republicans are already pushing to expand that figure closer to $17 billion. The proposal also includes policy priorities to support agricultural markets, including year-round E15 sales and updates to hemp-derived cannabinoid regulations. While the request is tied to a larger national security and public health package, it reflects ongoing recognition in Washington that producers continue to face tightening margins and volatility across input costs, energy markets, and trade flows. Congress is expected to debate both the size and structure of the agricultural provisions in the weeks ahead.

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