



UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
**AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,  
& FORESTRY**

U.S. SENATOR DEBBIE STABENOW, CHAIRWOMAN

## Research

The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act *keeps farmers farming* by investing in the tools farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners need to remain resilient and competitive, navigate market risks, and confront the climate crisis.

It builds the groundwork for an agriculture research moonshot by strengthening USDA's research programs and building bridges across government and private industry. The bill invests in the next generation of agricultural professionals – whether they are on the farm, in the lab, or in the boardroom – and it helps farmers navigate the stress of the riskiest business in the world.

### **Building Resilience Through Innovation:**

The bill strengthens the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) and the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) to address the challenges facing farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners and emphasizes research to address the climate crisis.

**The bill invests \$250 million in the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR), the largest investment in the Foundation to date from Congress.** This public-private partnership leverages \$1.40 in private investment for every \$1 of public funding, ensuring that our agriculture research dollars go further.

**The bill increases support for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI), investing \$1.3 billion over the next decade in mandatory funding** while providing the Secretary authority to waive matching funds requirements. For the first time, the bill dedicates resources to accelerating the development of new technology for specialty crop producers.

The bill addresses challenges facing organic farmers by improving coordination of organic research and reauthorizing the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative to support an industry that provides new economic opportunities in communities across the country.

Recognizing the need for additional resources, the legislation formalizes partnerships between USDA and the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and the Economic Development Administration to collaborate on agriculture research and extension efforts.

**Supporting the Ag Professionals of Today and Tomorrow:**

The bill **strengthens the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network** to connect individuals with the support they need to manage stress and improve mental health, including new referral relationships with Certified Behavioral Health Clinics to improve access to assistance.

It **invests in land-grant universities**, which are vital partners in conducting research, uplifting communities through cooperative extension, and preparing the next generation to feed, clothe, and fuel the world. In order to conduct the best research, our scientists need the best facilities – this bill invests \$100 million as a down payment to improve research facilities.

**For the first time, the bill permanently funds student scholarships at 1890 Institutions.** It also expands 1890 Centers of Excellence and strengthens reporting requirements to ensure states are meeting their funding obligations. It also upholds our commitment to students at 1994 tribal colleges and universities, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian serving institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, and insular area institutions.

The bill creates a new program to support partnerships between land-grant institutions, industry, and working farms to ensure that students are career-ready and can address the real, on-the-ground needs of our farms, ranches, and communities. It also creates a new program to bolster agriculture programs at community colleges around the country. Community colleges play an important role in educating and training the agriculture workforce, and many provide access for first-generation, minority, and underserved students to enter the agriculture economy.