

FARM ACTION NEWS ROUNDUP



Farm Action



Farm Action Fund



FARM ACTION FOCUS: TELL USDA TO SUPPORT FRUIT AND VEGETABLE FARMERS

The U.S. has become increasingly reliant on importing fruits and vegetables from other countries to feed our people. But we have the farmland acreage to grow enough produce to feed America — so why aren't we?

The answer comes down to a lack of farm system support for our specialty crop producers who grow fruits, vegetables, and tree nuts. Currently, row crop production — like corn and soybeans used for livestock feed — receives the lion's share of government support. Meanwhile, specialty crop growers struggle to compete against imported produce while receiving little support from the government.

As a result of this imbalanced farm support system, we are losing our specialty crop producers and have jeopardized the security of our nation's food system. [But you have the power to change this in just a few clicks!](#)

TAKE ACTION: Tell USDA to support our fruit and vegetable farmers!

USDA is seeking feedback on how it can more effectively support fruit and vegetable producers until March 8th, and **farmers need you to speak up**. Anyone can submit a comment, and we provide sample talking points to make it easy.

[TAKE ACTION](#)

NEWLY RELEASED 2022 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE REVEALS CORPORATE CONSOLIDATION'S IMPACT ON FARMERS

USDA's 2022 Census of Agriculture reveals that America's farmland is consolidating at an alarming rate as farmers are driven out of business.

According to the census, small and mid-sized farms declined rapidly while the number of large farms increased, and the U.S. lost a total of 141,733 farms, or roughly 7%, between 2017 and 2022.



And while inventories remained relatively stable, we lost 34% of dairy farms, 8.5% of hog farms, 7% of beef cattle farms, and 12% of our feedlots since 2017.

“Increasing concentration within our agricultural markets is squeezing America’s small and mid-sized farms out of business. While our farmers struggle with fewer suppliers to buy from and purchasers to sell to, the largest food and agriculture corporations are gaining greater power and raking in record profits off the backs of farmers and driving them off the land,” [said](#) Farm Action’s Joe Maxwell.

Farm Action will continue urging the White House and Congress to take a hard line against the dominant firms controlling our food and farm system.

[LEARN MORE](#)

FARM ACTION MOVEMENT NEWS

Currey McCullough, RFD-TV

[Right to Repair Costs Farmers More Than \\$4 Billion per Year, According to Farm Action](#)

Agricultural equipment manufacturers' repair restrictions cost farmers more than \$4 billion per year, explained Farm Action's Joe Maxwell. "It's real money in the pockets of America's family farmers and ranchers."

Noah Wicks, Agri-Pulse

['Right to Repair' Advocates Appeal to FTC for New Rules](#)

Farm Action submitted a comment urging FTC to protect the right to repair to save farmers time and money on agricultural equipment repairs.

Danielle Kaye, Bloomberg Law

[Koch Industries' Fertilizer Plant Purchase Sparks Antitrust Plea](#)

Farm Action and 17 organizations sent a letter to DOJ and FTC urging the agencies to investigate Koch Industries' planned acquisition of OCI Global's Iowa Fertilizer Company.

Steve Davies, Agri-Pulse

[Decrease in Small, Midsized Farms Highlighted in Ag Census](#)

The census "substantiates what farmers have known to be true for decades: Increasing concentration within our agricultural markets is squeezing America's small and mid-sized farms out of business," said Farm Action's Joe Maxwell.

FARM ACTION JOINS THE FIGHT ALONGSIDE PROTESTING EU FARMERS

Tens of thousands of farmers across the European Union are storming the streets as farmer-led protests continue to spread.

The specific demands vary from country to country, but the root cause of farmers' frustrations is the same: Governments all over the world are pushing policies that benefit the largest corporations while farmers are hung out to dry.



America's farmers are facing this same power struggle: Our government is working in concert with the largest multinational corporations to oppress America's family farmers, ranchers, and workers, and to deprive us of opportunities to prosper. It's

time for U.S. farmers and their supporters to join the fight.

Farm Action stands with farmers protesting across the world and encourages all Americans to [take action to level the playing field for farmers](#) by endorsing our list of demands, including the right to repair agricultural equipment, access to fair markets, and transparent food labeling. Learn more in our “[News to Chew on](#)” [blog](#) and share our petition on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

SIGN THE PETITION

MAJOR UPDATES ON THE KROGER-ALBERTSONS MEGA-MERGER

Big news is on the horizon: The FTC and a group of states are [expected](#) to sue as early as next week to block the Kroger-Albertsons mega-merger.

The proposed merger would further consolidate the national grocery market, creating the second-largest chain in the U.S. — leading to inflated prices, fewer markets for farmers, eroded wages, job cuts, expanded food deserts, and decreased competition. The deal has faced backlash from farm and anti-monopoly groups, labor unions, and consumers, while state attorneys general in [Washington](#) and [Colorado](#) have filed lawsuits to block the merger.

In order to proceed with the merger, Kroger and Albertsons would have to win all three trials — those in Colorado and Washington, as well as the FTC’s soon-to-be-announced trial — and [damning information](#) is coming to light with each trial’s investigation.

Here’s how Farm Action is fighting the proposed Kroger-Albertsons merger to protect farmers, workers, and consumers:

- To educate policymakers, we submitted a [statement for the record](#) on the proposed merger for the Congressional hearing.
- Our [blog](#) brings attention to the downstream effects of retail consolidation on farmers, consumers, and other small retailers.
- We [moderated](#) a roundtable discussion to raise awareness about the proposed merger featuring policy experts, consumers, and grocery workers. [Check out](#) the event highlights.

- We are participating in the [Stop the Merger Coalition](#) led by UFCW to work collaboratively with others in this fight.

Stay tuned for updates on this developing issue.

JOIN OUR ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION



[Join](#) Farm Action on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 for a virtual roundtable discussion to learn about the impacts of and solutions to our growing agricultural trade deficit from farmer, food system worker, and trade expert perspectives.

The U.S. used to be an agricultural powerhouse, consistently running an agricultural trade surplus. But for three of the last five years, the U.S. ran an agricultural trade deficit. Now, economists at the USDA are forecasting another deficit for 2024 of over \$30 billion — the worst ever on record.

This deficit leaves our food system vulnerable as we have become increasingly reliant on imports from other countries to feed our people. Our escalating agricultural trade deficit is an alarm bell to our nation’s farmers, ranchers, workers, and consumers — and it should be a wake up call for our government, too.

[REGISTER](#)

CALLS GROWING LOUDER FOR CONGRESS TO REJECT EFFORTS TO WEAKEN PACKERS & STOCKYARDS ACT IN AG FUNDING BILL

As negotiations on the government’s funding bill continue, calls to reject a harmful policy rider that would prevent USDA from issuing proposed rules to strengthen the Packers and Stockyards Act (P&S Act) are growing louder.

The P&S Act is meant to protect farmers and ranchers from abusive and anti-competitive behavior, and USDA has advanced rules to revitalize this critical legislation — including the recent rule that increases transparency in poultry growing contracts.



Last week, Farm Action signed a [letter](#) urging Congress to oppose any policy riders that would weaken the P&S Act in the Agriculture Appropriations bill, citing the importance of promoting competition in the meatpacking industry for farmers, ranchers, and consumers. Earlier this week, Senators Grassley and Tester echoed these concerns in their [letter to colleagues](#). Farm Action will continue fighting any attempts to weaken the P&S Act.

[LEARN MORE](#)

WHAT'S THE TALK? ALL ABOUT THE EATS ACT

Opposition to the [disastrous EATS Act](#) is heating up. Here's what the Farm Action team has been reading:

"If the Farm Bill includes the EATS Act or any language that nullifies state and local agriculture laws that keep American family farmers in business, we will have no choice but to actively oppose the passage and enactment of the legislation and we will engage our grassroots army to help defeat it," [said](#) Kimberly Fletcher, President of Moms for America.

Retailers and meat processors have joined the fight against the EATS Act: In a [recent letter](#), ButcherBox, duBreton, Niman Ranch, Perdue Foods, Pederson's Natural Farms, and Whole Foods Market urged members of the House and Senate Ag Committees not to include the harmful legislation in the upcoming farm bill.

"The EATS Act or something similar is a massive overreach of federal power," [writes](#) Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller in his The Hill op-ed. "[W]e must protect our sovereignty, and each and every state's Constitutional right to determine their own laws."

In his Food Tank op-ed, Niman Ranch’s Chris Oliviero [writes](#) that CA’s Prop 12 provides hog farmers with the opportunity to sell their crate-free pork at a higher price in a stable marketplace — but **the misguided EATS Act would thwart this much-needed economic opportunity.**

Our work is made possible by supporters like you. Please consider [making a donation](#) to fund our fight to create a food system that works for everyone, not just a handful of powerful corporations.

DONATE

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ABOUT US

[Farm Action](#) develops and advances bold solutions to stop corporate monopolies and empower farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. Our political partner organization, [Farm Action Fund](#), is building the political muscle to take action in our state and federal capitols and at the ballot box.



Together, our farmer-led organizations represent a seamless chain of action from research and policy development, to the adoption of the policy through legislative action by elected officials who support our vision.

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