



2026 FARM BILL PRIORITIES

LEVERAGE FEDERAL PROCUREMENT AS A MARKET-SHAPING TOOL

Federal food procurement can support public health, strengthen rural communities, and build a more competitive food system.

The federal government spends billions each year on food for schools, military bases, food banks, and other public programs. As one of the nation's largest and most reliable buyers, its purchasing decisions shape which farms and processors can compete, how supply chains are structured, and who holds market power.

For decades, procurement policies have rewarded the biggest vendors and the most centralized supply chains. Contracts flow to a handful of multinational corporations—such as Cargill, Tyson, and JBS—and deny independent, local, and regional producers stable markets. The result is a highly concentrated food system that is less competitive and more vulnerable to disruptions.

Public food dollars can be used differently. By prioritizing producers and supply chains that deliver clear public benefits—healthy food, environmental stewardship, and strong local economies—federal procurement can help rebuild local and regional food systems and strengthen competition.

Aligned Legislative Proposals:

- **Strengthening Local Food Security Act (S.2338)**
This bill would use federal purchasing power to expand access to fresh, locally sourced food in schools and underserved communities while creating new markets for farmers.
- **EFFECTIVE Food Procurement Act (S.3471 and H.R.6706)**
This bill would direct the USDA to prioritize food procurement that supports workers, family farms, sustainability, and animal welfare.

Contact Caroline Nodus at cnodus@farmaction.us for more information.