

# **From the Office of U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy Vermont And The 2014 Farm Bill Top-Line Highlights At-A-Glance**

**Dairy Margin Protection Program** – A new Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers will replace the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) safety net. This new approach creates a federally subsidized margin protection program that will help dairy farmers to offset low margins caused either by low milk prices or high input costs, and prevent an erosion of equity. A key element of the Senate Farm Bill -- the “market stabilization” provision that would have discouraged the over-supply of milk and protected taxpayers from high program costs -- was stripped out during the Conference negotiations due to objections from the House leadership. Through the final weekend of work on the bill, Leahy negotiated to secure new provisions to help Vermont’s small dairy farms to enroll at higher protection levels, and pay lower premium rates, while creating disincentives for mega-farms from enrolling and boosting production, which would have hurt smaller farms by depressing their market prices. “This is a new approach that will help farmers weather difficulties and ease the inherent uncertainties of dairy farming,” Leahy said. “I felt it important to keep the focus of this new program on smaller farms, and I’m pleased that these late-inning negotiations accomplished that.”

**Dairy Product Donation Program** – The Farm Bill creates a new dairy product purchase program that would allow the Secretary of Agriculture purchase dairy products for donation to food banks and other nonprofits that help low-income groups when margins (the difference between the cost of animal feed and farm milk prices) fall below \$4 per hundredweight for two consecutive months.

**Organic Certification Cost-Share Program** – The 2014 Farm Bill includes mandatory funding for the highly effective organic certification cost-share program. This program provides organic farmers and processors with 75 percent of, or a maximum of \$750, toward the cost of their organic certification. Senator Leahy – the “father” of the national organic standards and labeling program – noted that the organic agriculture continues to thrive as one of the fastest growing sectors of the agricultural economy. But he notes that continued demand growth threatens to outstrip U.S. organic supplies, encouraging a rise in imported organic products. This program will help farmers who want to undertake the costly transition to organic production to do that. Senator Leahy helped defeat attempts to eliminate this program, which has had a significant impact on the nation’s small farmers and can help to expand U.S. organic production. “We want U.S. organic agriculture to continue to thrive, and this will help,” he said.

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Deepest House Cuts Removed** -- The Farm Bill has long supported the hunger safety net through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). With so many Americans struggling to put food on the table, nutrition assistance and emergency assistance programs have become even more crucial. In Vermont more than one in five children and nearly one in seven households are food insecure, leaving families to rely on federal and state programs such as SNAP (renamed 3SquaresVT in Vermont), WIC, and the

federal School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Enrollment in 3SquaresVT has nearly tripled over the last decade, with more than 100,000 Vermonters now receiving benefits.

The final Farm Bill does not include many of the harmful provisions and deep cuts included in the House-passed legislation. The conference agreement removes the House provisions that would have arbitrarily eliminated eligibility for millions of Americans and made the program more onerous for states to administer.

**Healthy Food Initiatives** –The Farm Bill contains initiatives to encourage better health, increased access to local foods, improved nutrition for children and seniors, and support for programs that promote self-sufficiency and food security in the nation’s low-income communities. Specifically, these provisions include \$100 million in mandatory funding to help bring healthy food to underserved communities; initiatives to encourage purchases of fruits and vegetables by SNAP consumers at retail outlets, including farmers’ markets, support for food banks, farmers’ markets, and food hubs; allowing SNAP recipients to use their benefits to purchase a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share; and a pilot program to support bringing local food into schools.

**Vital Consumer Information** – The final bill eliminates the House provision that sought to place limits on the Country-Of-Origin Labeling (COOL) law that requires labels on packages of beef, pork, poultry and lamb sold in U.S. stores to carry specific information on the source of the meat. This law helps shoppers make informed decisions on their meat purchases.

**Improves Crop Insurance for Beginning Farmers** – The Farm Bill would give beginning farmers and ranchers a 10 percentage point discount for all crop insurance premiums. The bill also provides beginning farmers and ranchers with an improved production history when they have previous farming experience or when they face natural disasters.

**Crop Insurance for Specialty Crops and Organic Agriculture** – The 2014 Farm Bill expands risk management for specialty crops, organics, and underserved commodities by providing authority for the development of improved risk management tools.

**Regional Equity Program** – This program, which Senator Leahy initiated in the 2002 Farm Bill, helps bring more conservation resources to Vermont and other Northeastern states. The 2014 Farm Bill extends this program so that Vermont and other small states receive a fair distribution of USDA conservation funds. “By guaranteeing that each state receives a minimum share of program funding, the Regional Equity Program ensures that no state is left out in the cold and that Vermont will continue to get its fair share of conservation dollars to help farmers and Vermont’s environmental resources,” said Leahy.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program** – This new program is the result of the consolidation of the four existing regional programs into one new program that will support projects that improve soil quality, water quality, or wildlife habitat in specific areas or regions across the country. Projects for this new program will be selected through a competitive, merit-based process, and producers will be encouraged to leverage partner resources to achieve common goals. Within the program is a Critical Conservation Area component that funds

projects in areas with particularly significant water quality and quantity issues, facing natural resource regulatory pressures. Leahy sees this new program as a great fit for Lake Champlain and the vital water quality work taking place in Vermont.

**REAP Zone Program Reauthorized** – Senator Leahy fought to continue the Rural Economic Area Partnership Zone initiative that has been so successful in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom. REAP Zones set collaborative and citizen-led efforts to stimulate economic development.

**Northern Border Regional Commission** – The Northern Border Regional Commission was created in the 2008 Farm Bill with Leahy’s support. Since being funded for the first time two years ago, Vermont organizations have received more than \$500,000 to spur economic development and job growth in Vermont’s six northern-most counties. The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorizes the program for five years and includes administrative improvements to make the program more effective and efficient.

**Forest Legacy And Community Forests** – The final agreement rejects House provisions that would have severely limited funding for these two private forestry programs – originated in earlier farm bills by Senator Leahy – that have helped to permanently conserve tens of thousands of acres of Vermont forestland.

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## **Vermont Farm Bill Highlights**

### **Dairy and Livestock**

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**Dairy Margin Protection Program** - The final Farm Bill creates a new Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers to replace the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) safety net. This new approach creates a federally subsidized margin protection program that will help dairy farmers to offset low margins caused either by low milk prices or high input costs, and prevent an erosion of equity. Unfortunately a key element of the Senate Farm Bill, the market stabilization” provision that would have discouraged the over-supply of milk and protected taxpayers from high program costs was stripped out during the Conference negotiations due to objections from the House leadership. “I am disappointed that the final Farm Bill does not include the new Stabilization Program to help us break the harmful cycle of volatile milk prices, when supply and demand get too far out of sync. However, I am pleased that we were able to make improvements to the Farm Bill to help Vermont’s small dairy farms enroll at higher protection levels, while also creating some potential disincentives for the nation’s mega-farms from enrolling.” said Leahy.

**Dairy Product Donation Program** – The Farm Bill creates a new dairy product purchase program that would allow the Secretary of Agriculture purchase dairy products for donation to

food banks and other nonprofits that help low-income groups when margin (the difference between the cost of animal feed and farm milk prices) falls below \$4 per hundredweight for two consecutive months.

**King Amendment Removed** – The final Farm Bill rejects the House provision that sought to limit the ability of states and local governments from regulating the production and manufacture of agricultural products in other states. Targeted at the strict animal welfare standards in California, this amendment would have forced states like Vermont to allow the sale of a product that meets federal standards even if it does not meet the state’s standards. Chairwoman Stabenow, Senator Leahy, and many others fought to stripe this dangerous language from the final bill.

**Fair Competition** – The 2014 Farm Bill rejects the House provision to obliterate the farmer and rancher protections provided by the Packers and Stockyards Act through USDA’s Grain Inspection, Packers & Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). As farmers face growing consolidation in the livestock sector, it is critical that the Secretary of Agriculture is able to address deceptive, fraudulent, retaliatory, and anti-competitive practices by meatpackers and poultry companies. Senator Leahy has remained strongly committed to fighting anti-competitive and unfair business practices that have become commonplace in the livestock and poultry sectors across the country.

**Livestock & Supplemental Disaster Program** - The bill extends supplemental disaster assistance for producers whose livestock has been affected by high mortality rates caused by severe weather, disease, or other acts of nature. Additionally, it provides assistance to livestock producers who have experienced grazing losses due to drought, as well as assistance for recovery from natural disasters that destroy grazing land, honey bees, farm fish, orchard trees, and nursery trees.

## **Commodities and Crop Insurance**

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**Eliminates Direct Payments** -- Direct Payments, Counter-Cyclical Payments, the Average Crop Revenue Election Program, and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program are repealed, creating over \$10 billion in savings for deficit reduction.

**Improves Crop Insurance for Beginning Farmers** – The Farm Bill gives beginning farmers and ranchers a 10 percentage point discount for all crop insurance premiums. The bill also provides beginning farmers and ranchers with an improved production history when they have previous farming experience or when they face natural disasters.

**Crop Insurance for Specialty Crops and Organic Agriculture** – The 2014 Farm Bill expands risk management for specialty crops, organics, and underserved commodities by providing authority for the development of improved risk management tools. The bill requires that the Farm Service Agency and the Risk Management Agency share information and encourages correction of errors in order to ensure accuracy of reported information.

**Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** – The 2014 Farm Bill includes Senator Leahy’s “Buy Up” provision that will patch the hole in the safety net for producers of non-insurable crops, such as certain fruits and vegetables. For these producers, the level of risk protection they are currently provided under NAP only protects them from losses that could put them out of business. NAP was invaluable to Vermont producers after the devastating flooding of Tropical Storm Irene, but it would have been ineffective for less cataclysmic losses. Senator Leahy’s NAP Buy Up provision will allow the program to continue to offer the catastrophic-level coverage, but also gives producers the opportunity to elect higher coverage levels, which they pay a premium for based on the value of their production.

**Government Transparency** – The 2014 Farm Bill rejects the House amendment that would undermine government transparency laws. Senator Leahy supports the public’s right to access information on agricultural producers and other businesses.

## **Conservation and Environment**

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**Regional Equity Program** – This program, which Senator Leahy initiated in the 2002 Farm Bill, helps bring greater conservation resources to Vermont and other Northeastern states. The 2014 Farm Bill extends this program so that Vermont and other small states receive a fair distribution of USDA conservation funds. “By guaranteeing that each state receives a minimum share of program funding, the Regional Equity Program ensures that no state is left out in the cold and that Vermont will continue to get its fair share of conservation dollars to help farmers protect Vermont’s environmental resources,” said Leahy.

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** – Established in the 1996 Farm Bill with the help of Senator Leahy, EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to farmers to implement conservation practices. This program has helped farmers control the nitrogen and phosphorus runoff that has contributed to toxic algae blooms in Lake Champlain. The 2014 Farm Bill funds EQIP at over \$1.6 billion a year.

**Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE) Program** – The 2014 Farm Bill combines the Farmland Protection Program and the Grassland Reserve Program to create the new ALE Program. Operating through state and local partners, the ALE program provides permanent protection for working agricultural lands. Senators Leahy and Bennett offered an amendment, which was accepted during the Agriculture Committee markup, to allow greater flexibility for eligible entities to meet the financial matching requirements and to ease the determination for wetland easements. “This is a big step toward keeping viable working farms in business over the long term and ensuring that beginning farmers and ranchers are able to participate in the program,” said Leahy.

**Compliance for Crop Insurance** – The longstanding policy of requiring farmers to maintain a minimum level of conservation on highly erodible land and to preserve wetlands in exchange for federal benefits is continued in this Farm Bill. However, with the elimination of direct payments, conservation compliance is now linked to crop insurance subsidies rather than direct payments. This slight modification is nothing new for the majority of farmers, who are already in compliance because of the direct payment benefits they received last year. In Vermont,

participation in the current dairy support system also requires compliance with conservation programs, which has resulted in significant improvements to Vermont's water quality and a reduction in environmental damage.

**Sodsaver** – This program is an important measure for protecting the nation's native grass and prairie lands. The sod saver provision expands protection of native grasslands to additional prairie pothole states. Sodsaver seeks to protect our quickly disappearing native grasslands that are causing significant impacts on ranchers, hunters, rural communities and wildlife.

**Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)** – Provided on a competitive basis to encourage the development of new or improved conservation practices, CIG is geared toward projects that offer new approaches to providing producers environmental and production benefits. The Farm Bill added a new reporting requirement to increase program transparency.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program** – This new program is the result of the consolidation of the four existing regional programs into one new program that will support projects that improve soil quality, water quality, or wildlife habitat in specific areas or regions across the country. Projects for this new program will be selected through a competitive, merit-based process, and producers will be encouraged to leverage partner resources to achieve common goals. Within the program is a Critical Conservation Area component that funds projects in areas with particularly significant water quality and quantity issues facing natural resource regulatory pressures. This new program would be a great fit for Lake Champlain and the important water quality work taking place in Vermont.

**Congressional Mandated Use of Science** – The 2014 Farm Bill rejects the House amendment that would undermine federal agencies' ability to use scientific processes in policy decisions. Senator Leahy supports scientific innovation and will continue to fight against efforts to limit important research.

## **Hunger Safety Net**

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**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** – The Farm Bill has long provided our nation's hunger safety net through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). With so many Americans struggling to put food on the table, nutrition assistance and emergency assistance programs have become even more crucial. In Vermont, more than one in five children and nearly one in seven households are food insecure, leaving families relying on federal and state programs such as SNAP (renamed 3SquaresVT in Vermont), WIC, and the federal School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Enrollment in 3SquaresVT has nearly tripled over the last decade, with over 100,000 Vermonters now receiving benefits.

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banks, farmers' markets, and food hubs; allowing SNAP recipients to use their benefits to purchase a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share; and a pilot program to support bringing local food into our schools.

**Deepest Cuts to SNAP Removed** – The final Farm Bill does not include many of the harmful provisions and deep cuts included in the House-passed legislation. The conference agreement removes the House provisions that would have arbitrarily eliminated eligibility for millions of Americans and made the program more onerous for states to administer.

**Pilot Program to Bring Local Food into our Schools** – The bill allows up to eight pilot states the flexibility to purchase more local fruits and vegetables through the Department of Defense Fresh Program by prompting USDA to take geographic locations into account when purchasing foods for this program. If successful, this could be implemented nationwide to ensure fruits like apples won't be too ripe by the time they reach students in rural areas.

**Preserves SNAP Nutrition Education** – It is no coincidence that Vermont was rated the second healthiest state in the nation for 2013. The Farm Bill helps Vermonters to stay healthy by maintaining current funding levels to help eligible SNAP recipients learn how to eat healthily and maintain an active lifestyle on a limited budget. This program has seen increased interest in Vermont in recent years as the program helps teach families how to make healthy food choices and get the most nutrition out of their limited food budget.

**Continues Employment and Training Program** – The 2014 Farm Bill is focused on helping Vermonters find jobs by continuing Employment and Training activities.

### **Local Foods, Organic Agriculture, and Food Safety**

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**Organic Certification Cost-Share Program** – The 2014 Farm Bill includes mandatory funding for the highly effective organic certification cost-share program. This program provides organic farmers and processors with 75 percent, or a maximum of \$750, toward the cost of their organic certification. Senator Leahy – the “father” of the national organic standards and labeling program – noted that the organic agriculture continues to thrive as one of the fastest growing sectors of the agricultural economy. But he noted that continued demand-growth threatens to outstrip U.S. organic supplies, encouraging a rise in imported organic products. This program will help farmers to undertake the costly transition to organic production. Senator Leahy helped defeat attempts to eliminate this program, which has had a significant impact on the nation's small farmers and can help to expand U.S. organic production. “We want U.S. organic agriculture to continue to thrive, and this will help,” he said.

**Organic Data Initiatives Program** – The 2014 Farm Bill continues the organic data initiatives program at USDA for important national data collection about the organic sector. The bill also directs the Secretary of Agriculture to collect data on the production and marketing of locally or regionally produced agricultural food products, facilitate interagency collaboration and data sharing on programs related to local and regional food systems, and evaluate the success of current local promotion programs.

**Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program** – The Farm Bill expands this program which has yielded widespread success and participation throughout Vermont. Funding for the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program is crucial to the growing number of Americans who look to local farmers to supply healthy food. It will be important to Vermont’s Farm to Plate initiative. Senator Leahy said, “The Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program results in improved local food hubs and supports farm to plate initiatives like the ones that are thriving in Vermont.” One success story among many is Vermont Farm-to-School Inc., in Newport. In 2011, this organization received funds from the program to launch a new mobile farmers’ market.

**Promoting Maple Syrup Research and Marketing** – The new ACER Access and Development Program is authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill to provide grants to support the domestic maple syrup industry through promotion of research and education related to maple syrup production, promotion of natural resources sustainability in the maple syrup industry, market development for maple syrup and maple-sap products, and encouragement of private land owners to initiate or expand maple-sugaring.

**Specialty Crop Block Grants** – The 2014 Farm Bill includes a healthy increase in funding for Specialty Crop Block Grants. This program enhances the competitiveness of specialty crop groups by promoting local and regional farm and food system specialty crop development within each state. These grants can be used to enhance state and regional marketing programs, direct-to-consumer and direct-to-store marketing, access to specialty crops for low-income consumers, food hubs, and new-farmer specialty crop development.

**Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas** – The Farm Bill reauthorizes the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, an important program that awards competitive grant funding to national non-profit organizations that provide agricultural producers information on input cost reduction, conservation of energy resources, and expansion of markets through the use of sustainable farming practices.

**Combats Pest and Disease Focusing on Early Detections** – The Farm Bill reauthorizes and consolidates two very effective programs, the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program and the National Clean Plant Network. Detecting and responding to a plant pest or disease in the early stages of its introduction saves taxpayer dollars and minimizes the potentially devastating impact on Vermont’s farms and forests.

**Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)** – Senator Leahy continues to fight hard for AMA to better serve Vermont’s organic farmers. AMA helps producers develop sustainable practices that protect their farmland and ensure that the health of our shared water systems is protected. This program is especially important when major storms, such as Tropical Storm Irene, devastate a landscape, erode soil and spread contaminants into the water system. AMA lessens the toll of natural disasters like Irene, paying long-term dividends and greatly reducing future mitigation costs.

## **Research**

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**Organic Research Initiative** – The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorizes the Organic Research and Extension Initiative and provides \$20 million a year in mandatory funding.

**Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research** – The Farm Bill creates a new non-profit foundation, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, to leverage private funding, matched with federal dollars, to support agricultural research. This innovative approach will foster continued innovation in agricultural research, and the Farm Bill authorizes \$200 million a year for the foundation.

**Addressing Shortages of Veterinarians** -- The bill would help address the shortage of veterinarians in rural agricultural areas by supporting veterinary education and rural recruitment.

**Continues Specialty Crop Research** – The Farm Bill provides \$55 million in mandatory funding for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, ensuring funding will be available for key research projects for fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops. The bill also ensures that funding will be available for this program in the next Farm Bill.

**Hemp Research** – The 2014 Farm Bill authorizes institutes of higher education to cultivate hemp for agricultural purposes or for academic research.

**National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA)** - The Farm Bill reauthorizes NORA, a collaborative program established by the oilheating industry to strengthen and improve the industry through education and training for employees, providing consumers with information on how they can increase efficiency and reduce their environmental impact, and developing new products for consumers.

## **Rural Communities**

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**Leahy Gigabit Pilot Program** – The 2014 Farm Bill establishes a new pilot program to fund gigabit projects in rural areas. While it is important that the broadband program focus on truly unserved areas, Leahy believes that it is vital to ensure that investments are also made in networks that will not become obsolete within the next few years. Gigabit Internet is spreading to cities across the country and this pilot will allow USDA to test out investment in gigabit networks in rural areas before rural America falls further behind. To learn more, click [here](#).

**State Rural Development Councils** – When the Senate considered the Farm Bill in 2012, Senator Leahy offered an amendment to continue the authorization for State Rural Development Councils. The Senate passed the Leahy amendment with bipartisan support and this language was included in the 2014 Farm Bill. Reauthorization of these effective and efficient councils will allow them to continue their important work of strengthening rural communities in Vermont and across the country.

**Encourages Rural Entrepreneurship** – The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorizes the Rural Microenterprise Assistance Program that provides entrepreneurs in rural areas with the skills necessary to establish new businesses and continue operation of existing rural microenterprises. The program awards grants to microenterprise development organizations to provide training,

business planning assistance, market development assistance, and other services to rural businesses. This program also awards funding for the establishment of microloan programs designed to support entrepreneurs in rural areas.

**Water, Waste Disposal and Wastewater Facility Grants and Loans** – This program provides grants, loans and loan guarantees to public agencies for projects that support the development, storage, treatment, purification, or distribution of water or the collection, treatment, or disposal of waste in rural areas

**Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)** – This extremely popular program has helped many Vermont farms and sugarmakers lower their energy bills through the installation of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, including methane digesters. The Farm Bill simplifies the application process for farmers and rural businesses applying for small and medium sized projects. The Farm Bill includes \$50 million in mandatory funding each year for REAP, with an additional authorization of \$20 million in discretionary funding.

**Community Wood Energy Program** – The Farm Bill reauthorizes the Community Wood Energy Program which is designed to provide competitive, cost-share grants for communities to supply public buildings with energy from sustainably-harvested wood from the local area.

**Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition** – The Farm Bill recognizes that animal fighting spectators, through their attendance, admission fees, and wagers are active participants in and enablers of these cruel criminal enterprises. The bill creates federal criminal penalties for any individual who knowingly attends or knowingly brings a minor under the age of 16 years old to one of these violent events. This provision will address the challenge that law enforcement faces when a fight is raided and the organizers, promoters, trainers, and owners are able to disperse and blend into the crowd to escape arrest.

**REAP Zones** – Senator Leahy has fought to continue the Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) Zone initiative that has been so successful in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. REAP Zones set up collaborative and citizen-led efforts to enhance economic development. This effort is a great model for building a new rural economy that other rural areas are sure to emulate.

**Northern Border Regional Commission** – The Northern Border Regional Commission was created in the 2008 Farm Bill with the support of Senator Leahy. Since being funded for the first time two years ago, Vermont organizations have received more than \$500,000 to spur economic development and job growth in Vermont's six northern-most counties. The 2014 Farm Bill reauthorizes the program for five years and includes administrative improvements that will make the program more effective and efficient.

## **Forestry**

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**Forest Legacy and Community Forests** – The 2014 Farm Bill rejects the House provisions that would have severely limited the authorized funding levels for these two indispensable private forestry programs – originated in earlier Farm Bills by Senator Leahy -- that have helped to permanently conserve tens of thousands acres of Vermont forestland.

**Addresses Insect and Disease Infestations** – The nation’s forests experiencing epidemic levels of insect infestations and New England is facing threats from the Asian longhorned beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer. The bill focuses on areas and watersheds where help is needed most to improve or protect forest health.

**Forest Stewardship Contracting** – The Farm Bill reauthorizes this effective tool for land management that allows the Forest Service to conduct important restoration work to improve the health of our nation’s forests and has been responsible for important forest work in Vermont’s Green Mountain National Forest.

### **International Food Aid & Agricultural Trade Promotion**

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**Market Access Program** - This program is reauthorized and provides important matching funds to promote U.S. agricultural products in overseas markets. MAP has been an important tool for the dairy industry and U.S. cheese producers looking to market products abroad.

**Foreign Market Development Program** – The Farm Bill reauthorizes this key trade program that provides matching funds to nonprofit commodity or trade associations to aid in the long-term expansion of export markets for U.S. agricultural products. This program has helped to create, expand, and maintain foreign markets for U.S. dairy exports.

**Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement** – Recognizing the importance of flexibility to respond to changing food aid needs the 2014 Farm Bill expands on the success of a pilot program from the 2008 Farm Bill, Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement allows organizations to purchase food through local and regional markets. This promotes stability by supporting local producers and economies.

**Prepositioning** - The bill increases the amount of funds available to support strategic prepositioning, which brings food aid commodities to at-risk regions before food emergencies strike.

**Food for Peace** – The largest food aid program under the Agriculture Committee’s jurisdiction, Food for Peace provides for emergency aid and non-emergency development projects. This notable program enables the U.S. to donate food overseas to promote food security and the 2014 Farm Bill reauthorizes the program and makes important reforms that will improve the U.S. response to crisis.

**McGovern-Dole** – The McGovern–Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program facilitates distribution of food commodities through schools in developing countries through partner organizations to improve food security, reduce hunger, and improve literacy in low income and food deficit countries. The program has projects in over 40 countries and feeds about 5 million children in need every year.

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