

## Farm Bill Reauthorization

**Issue:** Reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

**NACo policy:** NACo supports full funding of all titles in the 2012 reauthorization of the Farm Bill and calls on Congress and the Administration to place particular emphasis on crafting a bill that provides enhanced resources to rural development programs and strategies that promote rural prosperity.

**Action needed:** Ask your members of Congress and the Administration to support a robust farm bill reauthorization that makes rural development programs a priority and targets rural development funding towards regional strategies that are based on local priorities and assets.

**Background:** The 2008 Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2012. Election year politics will make it difficult to finish the bill in 2012, but the House and Senate Agriculture Committees will hold hearings and adopt their versions of the legislation by spring or summer of 2012. The Farm Bill is a massive piece of legislation which authorizes a broad range of programs that are critical to counties. These programs assist counties in the development of rural water/wastewater infrastructure, community facilities, broadband expansion, nutrition assistance, renewable energy, local and regional food systems, support for new farmers, and business development initiatives. All titles of the 2012 farm bill are important to the vitality of our nation; therefore NACo supports full funding of all titles.

NACo supports four key Farm Bill reauthorization priorities that will help rural counties revitalize their economies and quality of life.

- 1) NACo supports an enhanced commitment to USDA Rural Development programs in the next farm bill, especially key infrastructure and business development programs that support the agricultural sector and the retention and creation of businesses.
- 2) NACo supports rural development strategies which focus on making USDA's investments more efficient and effective by rewarding strategic regional approaches to rural development that allow counties and their regional partners to focus on their local economic assets, priorities and goals.
- 3) NACo supports enhanced funding for renewable energy development, especially programs that assist local governments in their efforts to develop renewable energy and increase energy efficiency.
- 4) NACo supports policies that ensure all programs recognize that youth play a vital role in sustaining American agriculture and rural communities. New programs and updates to ongoing programs are needed so that it is possible for young and beginning farmers to survive and thrive in the modern agricultural economy.

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