



2026 Farm Bill: Nutrition Security Recommendations

The 2026 Farm Bill is a critical opportunity for Congress to advance food and nutrition security for millions of Americans, especially those who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). We believe the best farm bill is one that ensures families have greater food and nutrition security.

Our ideal vision for a farm bill promotes nutrition and health, addresses nutrition security by improving the food environment to increase access to healthy food, invests in nutrition research, and strengthens nutrition education. The following document details specific recommendations developed by the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) coalition to ensure that the 2026 farm bill truly supports health and well-being.

Endorsement of these recommendations does not imply that signatories have taken a position on every recommendation.

Protect and strengthen benefit levels for and access to SNAP

We ask Congress to expand funding for SNAP, including by:

- Reversing implementation of SNAP state cost sharing. Funding for states' SNAP programs has been slashed, which will create unaffordable administrative burdens and risk deep cuts or even ending SNAP in some states entirely.
- Restoring authority to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to increase the Thrifty Food Plan so that SNAP can keep pace with the cost of a healthy diet.
- Removing the work requirement expansion that impacted families with children aged 14+, older adults aged 55-64, youth aging out of foster care, unhoused individuals, and veterans.
- Restoring states' ability to waive the three-month SNAP time limit for certain adults without dependents in areas with high unemployment rates.
- Restoring food assistance to lawfully present humanitarian-based immigrants.
- Restoring the Standard Utility Allowance for working-age adults and those without disabilities, including allowing internet expenses to count as a deduction.

Improve the food environment by increasing equitable access to nutritious foods

Improving the food environment requires strengthening programs that expand access to nutritious foods while supporting farmers, producers, and local food systems. Strategic investments in nutrition assistance, food procurement initiatives, and farmers markets help build more resilient supply chains and support the health of communities across the country. We ask Congress to improve the food environment, including by:

- Requiring all federal agencies administering nutrition and food security programs to provide materials, outreach, and communications in accessible languages beyond English. Limiting communication to English-only is inequitable and undermines the ability of millions of eligible households with limited English proficiency to access vital nutrition assistance.
- Strengthening The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Farm to Food Bank Projects (FTFB) by increasing funding to \$25 million annually and reducing or eliminating the state match requirement. The FTFB supply chain is a key opportunity to increase nutritious donations while cutting food waste.
- Authorizing and reinstating funds for the Local Food Purchase Assistance Program (LFPA) to support local producers and improve access to nutritious food in food banks.
- Strengthening the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) by:
 - Increasing annual funding from \$75 million to \$150 million to continue national expansion, both in-store and online, with a strong focus on farmers markets and small grocers that connect local producers with SNAP shoppers.
 - Reducing or eliminating the match requirement to allow equitable participation from under-resourced organizations and communities.
 - Prioritizing recruitment and support for diverse types of retailers—including farmers markets, small grocers, and culturally specific food outlets—to expand access to culturally desirable, nutritious foods.
 - Establishing a tiered grant program or cooperative agreement between USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), and SNAP state agencies or nonprofit/local government partners to support the statewide scaling of fruit and vegetable incentives.
 - Advancing integration for fruit and vegetable incentives onto electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards.
- Increasing funding for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to make it automatically available to any elementary school where 50 percent or more of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

Prioritize food and nutrition security research

Strong research and evaluation are essential to advancing nutrition security and improving SNAP's effectiveness. The following recommendations aim to ensure that policy decisions about nutrition are guided by robust evidence. Congress can help strengthen nutrition research through the farm bill, including by:

- Directing USDA to reinstate annual data collection and reporting on food security. The Economic Research Reports on Household Food Security in the United States provide a critical foundation for understanding the state of hunger in the U.S. and informing policy and program interventions to address it.
- Directing USDA FNS, USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), to establish an interagency working group to develop a standard mechanism, instrument(s), and methods for measuring nutrition security in research. The working group must be a cooperative effort across federal agencies and include academic and private-sector research experts in the field as collaborators and reviewers. Formalizing a valid measure of nutrition security will allow researchers and practitioners to adequately assess barriers to consistent access to food that promote well-being.
- Increasing investments in both extra- and intramural USDA nutrition research by authorizing full funding for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) at \$700 million annually.

Additionally, Congress should direct USDA to strengthen nutrition research by:

- Building research and evidence-based literature for innovation and improvements in USDA nutrition program effectiveness and efficiencies.
- Investing in research that includes nutrition program evaluation, surveillance, and reporting systems that provide evidence regarding actions to improve access, equity, and cultural alternatives.
- Supporting research that evaluates federal, state, and local factors that impact participation in and health impacts of USDA nutrition programs.
- Funding, developing, and sharing evaluation approaches that provide valid and reliable data, include qualitative and quantitative measurements, and facilitate assessment across all federal nutrition programs.

Restore and strengthen nutrition education to support community health

For many years, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) supported nutrition education infrastructure and community partnerships that helped families afford and access healthy food, increase physical activity, and strengthen connections to local food systems. As states, territories, Tribal Nations, and local communities navigate the recent loss of these programs, the farm bill presents an important opportunity for Congress to establish a strong, modernized approach to nutrition education and promotion as a core component of chronic disease prevention and well-being. The role of Congress can include:

- Authorizing and providing mandatory funding for a new national *Nutrition and Physical Activity for a Healthier America* program that builds on the most effective elements of SNAP-Ed while responding to current health, economic, and food system realities. This new initiative should ensure families have access to healthy foods and physical activity, the skills to budget, shop for, and prepare nutritious foods, and community conditions that make healthy choices easier, while also strengthening connections to American

farmers, producers, and retailers. The program should be designed to complement, align with, and not duplicate existing CDC nutrition and physical activity efforts, including state and community chronic disease prevention initiatives, by leveraging USDA's important role in reaching households through nutrition assistance, food retail, and community food environments, and connections to American farmers, producers, and retailers.

Delivered through noncompetitive grants to states, U.S. territories and Tribal Nations, the program should harness the power and reach of public, nonprofit, Tribal, academic, and private-sector partners and be structured around four core pillars:

- Infrastructure to strengthen community and market environments so healthy eating and physical activity are more accessible;
- Nutrition education and messaging that are practical, actionable, evidence-based, and delivered at key decision points across the lifespan, including in schools, retail settings, workplaces, media, and digital platforms;
- Coordination to better align USDA and HHS programs, reduce duplication, improve accountability, and maximize impact; and
- Innovation to pilot and scale promising strategies, including digital tools, healthy food incentives, and farm-to-institution models, to increase the reach and effectiveness of USDA nutrition programs.

Organizational Signatories

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

American Heart Association

American Public Health Association

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA)

Balanced

The CAUSE

Center for Biological Diversity

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Center for Wellness and Nutrition

Louisiana Food Policy Council

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Education Association

National Farm to School Network

Partnership for a Healthier America

Pilot Light

Roots of Change

Society of Behavioral Medicine

Trust for America's Health

About the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA)

These recommendations were developed by the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) coalition. NANA is the nation's largest nutrition advocacy coalition composed of over 500 national, state, and local organizations, and Steering Committee consisting of: 1,000 Days; Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; American Academy of Pediatrics; American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network; American Heart Association; American Public Health Association; Association of State Public Health Nutritionists; Center for Science in the Public Interest; International Fresh Produce Association; National Association of Chronic Disease Directors; National WIC Association; Nemours Children's Health System; Trust for America's Health; and UnidosUS.

NANA envisions a country where everyone has access to adequate, affordable, culturally appropriate, and nutritious food; where the food environment promotes healthy eating; in which evidence-based nutrition policy is the basis of food policies and programs; and in which physical activity is promoted. NANA is committed to carrying out this work with a particular focus on reaching priority populations, starting from the earliest years, eliminating health disparities, and advancing racial justice. These systemic changes will reduce the illnesses, diseases, disabilities, premature deaths, and costs associated with diet and inactivity. Our efforts include advocating for strong public policy and program funding such as for federal nutrition programs, supporting effective education programs, and promoting structural and policy approaches to help the public eat better and be more active. www.NANACoalition.org

For more information, please contact policy@cspinet.org.