

June 6, 2022

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chair  
Senate Agriculture Committee  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boozman  
Ranking Member  
Senate Agriculture Committee  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman:

Thank you for your leadership and collaboration to support our nation's farmers, ranchers, and foresters. We, the undersigned, represent land grant universities, farm organizations, corporations, researchers, and environmental and conservation organizations invested in agricultural sustainability and the science and systems needed for our food security.

We support Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and John Thune (R-SD) in their introduction of strong bipartisan legislation, the Agriculture Innovation Act (S.4189), which directs USDA to:

- Employ data and analysis to conduct research that improves public policy, enhances farm profitability, and creates positive environmental outcomes benefiting water quality, quantity, soil health, wildlife, and greenhouse gas reductions.
- Improve access to departmental datasets for qualified researchers in a manner that protects producer privacy.
- Improve data collection by USDA on the continuous use of conservation practices.
- Streamline USDA's data collection process to reduce the reporting burden on producers.

USDA manages a wealth of farmer data scattered across multiple internal agencies, making that data difficult to access, analyze, and produce useful information for all sizes and types of farming operations in addition to creating costly inefficiencies. The Agriculture Innovation Act aims to provide farmers with the information they need to make informed economic decisions regarding conservation practice implementation. By improving USDA's and other agricultural stakeholders' ability to securely access and analyze anonymous cross-agency USDA data, farmers will better understand the economic, environmental, and risk-management benefits of specific conservation and production practices and how to implement them in a way that maximizes their bottom line. The Act will also maximize taxpayer dollars by improving USDA's data systems, helping USDA utilize its data to run more effective and efficient programs, and make more targeted investments.

Healthy, functioning landscapes are made possible through hard work, partnership, and sound decision making. Providing land managers with access to the best available data enables risk- and science-based decision-making, positions USDA agencies to deliver better technical assistance, and increases the use of key practices that deliver soil health while improving crop yields. We urge you to consider inclusion of this bill in a committee hearing and thoughtful action to progress the bill's provisions.

Sincerely,

AGree

American Fly Fishing Trade Association

American Sportfishing Association

Angler Action Foundation

Archery Trade Association

Ashok Mishra and Mitchell Roznick Morrison School of Agribusiness, Arizona State University

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

BPC Action

Danone North America

Ducks Unlimited

Environmental Defense Fund

Fly Fishers International

Indigo Ag

Izaak Walton League of America

National Corn Growers Association

National Deer Association

National Wildlife Federation

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Pheasants Forever

Quail Forever

Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Unilever United States

Wildlife Management Institute

cc:

The Honorable David Scott, Chair, House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable Glen Thompson, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee