



**American
Sustainable
Business
Network**

June, 7th 2024

Dear Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Scott, Chairwoman Stabenow, and Ranking Member Boozman,

The undersigned American Sustainable Business Network (ASBN) writes to you to urge your timely action to pass a farm bill that maintains the 'climate guardrails' on the historic climate-smart agriculture investments from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Protecting these guardrails ensures a farm bill that prioritizes regenerative agriculture practices to ensure the continued prosperity of US farmers, rural communities, and the wider economy. In an economy marked by growing uncertainty, severe and unpredictable climate conditions, and global supply chain instability, U.S. farmers need the certainty of a finalized farm bill to make informed decisions for the future of their businesses. Recognizing the opportunity that these practices present for American businesses, ASBN convenes the Regenerative Agriculture and Justice working group, a cross-sector business and investor initiative working in cooperation with farmers, ranchers, and other stakeholders from all aspects of the agricultural supply chain. **As Farm Bill negotiations continue, we ask you to include the set of policy priorities previously developed by the group as well as emphasize the importance of protecting the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) climate-smart guard rails from legislative or financial cuts for this opportunity to be actualized.** You can read the letter detailing the priorities [here](#).

The IRA's \$20 Billion allocation and legislative climate guardrails are critical to scaling the national transition to regenerative agriculture. Because of its focus on building soil health, minimizing costly inputs, and enhancing biodiversity through a combination of context and place-based conservation practices, regenerative agriculture appeals to a wide range of stakeholders from farmers and business leaders to environmentalists. Regenerative agriculture and other similar approaches are vital for rebuilding the health of our natural systems, restoring clean water, repairing hydrological cycles to reduce flooding and drought, and allowing wildlife to flourish. Not only have these practices been shown to **increase [on-farm resilience](#) to increasing extreme weather events, thereby boosting profitability, but they also [increase yields](#) and [lower on farm costs](#).**

Recent data reveals that **[80% of U.S. consumers](#) are concerned about the environmental impact of the products they buy and [40% would be willing to pay a premium for those](#)**

[products](#). Notably, the soil under regenerative management can sequester a significant amount of CO₂, making it pivotal in the fight against the climate crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the sale of meat with labels boasting environmental and labor benefits increased 18% compared to conventionally labeled meat products. Meanwhile, [75-80% of U.S. grass-fed supply is imported](#) despite “grown in the USA” labels. Similarly, [a recent report](#) projected that the sustainable fashion industry market was expected to more than double from 2021 to \$15 billion by 2030. Consumers want the assurance that their products align with their values. In order for farmers to meet this market demand, they need support to adopt easily accessible, low-tech agroecological, climate-friendly practices — not false climate solutions.

Despite proven return on investment, market bottlenecks cause demand to continue to exceed supply. Although adopting regenerative methods can lead to improved yields and reduced input costs in the long run, the initial expenses—such as fencing, equipment, and cover crop seeds—can be prohibitive. Additionally, many farmers lack access to education and technical support on soil health and regenerative practices.

Current agricultural policy and market structures favor large-scale producers. As a result, small-scale and regenerative farmers are excluded from the majority of funding made available by the Farm Bill. This would be compounded by the inclusion of preemptive bills that undermine the authority of state, county, and local governments to set policies on agricultural production, food safety, and pesticide use. These bills would pave the way for widespread deregulation allowing for more cost-cutting measures at the expense of the quality of our food, public health, and the environment while further driving corporate consolidation. Democratically elected local governments are best positioned to make decisions on how to meet the needs of their communities to ensure a level playing field for small producers and businesses, and to protect the public health of their constituents.

Despite this, an opportunity lies in the conservation title. The funding mechanisms in the conservation title equip farmers with the skills, resources, and training that are needed to support their transition regardless of size, crop, or location. As it currently operates, [75% of farmers](#) who apply for conservation programs get turned away because of funding limitations. The conservation funds from the IRA would expand this capacity to help small and regenerative farms stay competitive and resilient in the long run, thus more equitably distributing the funds across our food system.

Sincerely,