The California Farm Bill Caucus is a coalition of the state's leading sustainable agriculture organizations. Our eleven member organizations are the California-based members of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.

Many of the most critical farm bill programs are at risk as Congress prioritizes deficit reduction. Yet making budget-cutting decisions without consideration of the relative effectiveness and value of different USDA programs will not result in a robust economic future.

Programs that support job creation and conservation must be protected because they form the foundation of labor and natural resources upon which our agriculture depends. Below we outline our priorities to secure a healthy, prosperous and secure food and farming system for California and the rest of the country.

**Conservation:**
- Oppose cuts to the conservation title.
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) payments should be particularly targeted at infrastructure and initial implementation of conservation management practices. EQIP payment limits should be lowered to allow for a higher number of participants. Ensure that EQIP Organic Initiative is continued and that organic payment limits are raised to equal those of the broader EQIP program.
- The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) should be continued and expanded with a higher per-acre cap. Farmers should be able to re-enroll in the program indefinitely, provided they have met prior commitments and are planning to address additional resource concerns. A minimum CSP payment level should be established.

**Organic:**
- National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program (NOCCSP): Fund at $30 million over 5 years and increase the maximum dollar cap from $750 to $1,000.
- Organic Crop Insurance: The farm bill should ensure that organic crop insurance policies pay out at the organic price and should include an organic premium surcharge.

**Research, Education, and Extension:**
- ATTRA/ The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service: $2.8 million in mandatory funding should be provided.
- SARE: Maintain its program structure and funding.
- Specialty Crop Block Grants: Increase mandatory funding to $110 million, $50 million of which should be allocated to local and regional farm and food system development.
- Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI): Provide $30 million per year in mandatory funding.
- Organic Data Initiative: Provide mandatory funding to ensure organic producers have equal access to
organic price, production, and other key economic data.

- Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Initiative: Provide mandatory funding of $15 million a year for this program.

**Beginner and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers:**
- Individual Development Accounts Pilot Program: Reauthorize and provide $5 million per year in mandatory funding.
- Ensure that a higher percent of working lands conservation program dollars are reserved for beginner farmers and ranchers, and allow for a higher share of cost-share funds for such farmers.
- Increase information to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers regarding USDA programs and increase access to application assistance.
- Provide marketing assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP): Reauthorize and amend to ensure the program best supports new producers. Mandatory funding should be increased to $125 million over the next 5 years.

**Rural Development and Food Systems:**
- Farmers Market Promotion Program Grants: Mandatory funding at $20 million per year.
- Value-Added Producer Grant Program: Restore a mandatory funding baseline for the program of $30 million a year for each year of the next farm bill cycle.
- Commodity Food Purchase Program: Allow schools to use their line of credit for feeding programs to purchase healthy produce, dairy, and other products from local farmers.
- Enterprise Facilitation for Local & Regional Food Businesses: Fund Extension facilitators to help create sustainable local and regional food systems.