



SSAFE Advocacy Action Alert Forest Funding in The Farm Bill

FACT SHEET

What is the Farm Bill? It's authorized once every five years to fund programs for farmers, forests, food production, and related issues. This year Congress must pass a revised version for new and existing programs. *We want to ensure no cuts in funding.*

\$20 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act for **climate-smart conservation practices and healthy forests** has been allocated for the new version of the Farm Bill – we need to keep it that way since some members of Congress will move to strip or reallocate portions of these funds.

What is Agroforestry? Agroforestry integrates trees and shrubs with animal agriculture and farmed crops. That creates higher crop yields, improved soil health, carbon sequestration, reduced erosion, and more.

More trees mean more shade for livestock to provide some resilience against worsening heat. It's been practiced worldwide for centuries. It isn't as popular in the United States as it is in other countries, but the benefits of shade for animals are now better understood. With proper funding and attention, agroforestry fights climate change.

The \$20 billion over five years is for programs that help farmers and ranchers implement conservation practices that increase carbon storage through soil nurturance and trees. Some of these agroforestry programs, like forest management, need more than the limited funds they've received in the past to *preserve incentives crucial for expanding climate-smart practices.*

What are the Benefits of Agroforestry? Trees are nature's vacuum cleaner, pulling 12% of America's carbon pollution out of the air each year and reducing the impacts of climate change. By protecting, expanding, and managing our forests in a climate-smart way, they can do even more – up to 22% by 2030.

Yet the world loses [25 million acres of forests per year to deforestation](#). That's a lower rate than the 40 million acres annually lost in the 1990s, but we have to do much better, starting here at home.



Optional Extra Action – Individual Letter Writing and Letters to the Editor

Use the information below to write letters directly to your Members of Congress and letters to the editor to the publication of your choice.

PROTECT CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY!

Congress will likely pass a new Farm Bill by October 2024.

Its draft version contains \$20 billion allocated from the Inflation Reduction Act for **climate-smart conservation practices and healthy forests**. These programs help farmers and ranchers conserve soil and manage forest tracts to increase crop yields, improve soil health, sequester carbon, reduce erosion, and more.

We need to keep all these excellent programs in the new Farm Bill since **some members of Congress will move to strip** or reallocate portions to issues not related to agriculture or forestry.

If we don't make our voices heard, our members of Congress will be **pressured by self-interested corporate lobbyists instead**.

Yes, your voice will be heard! Congressional staffers take every call and voicemail, read every email their office receives, and pass these on to their members of Congress in regular briefings. Members *do* want to know what their constituents care about. You may receive a generic email in response, but your message is still received loud and clear. Even more so when you're combining your voice with hundreds of other SSAFE members and thousands of Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) volunteers across the nation.

SSAFE and CCL will continue to mobilize for climate-smart measures in the new Farm Bill until it is enacted.

Email your members of Congress just once yourself. Then, share this page with friends, family, and coworkers who want to help get climate-smart forestry legislation passed in Congress!



Optional Educational Resources to Inspire Action

Video: Farm Bill 101: Forestry Title, 1.5 minutes, by Defenders of Wildlife, available for free on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXbbAC79IY8>

Video: Our Planet | Forests, 48 minutes, narrated by David Attenborough, available on Netflix (<https://www.netflix.com/title/80049832>) and free on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkaxUblCGz0>)

Video: Our Planet “How to Restore Forests”, 8 minutes, watch for free at: <https://www.ourplanet.com/en/video/how-to-restore-our-forests/>

Video: TED Talk “How trees talk to each other”, 18 minutes, by Suzanne Simard, 2016, available to watch free at: https://www.ted.com/talks/suzanne_simard_how_trees_talk_to_each_other

Book: *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate—Discoveries from A Secret World (The Mysteries of Nature, 1)* by Peter Wohlleben (Author), 2106, Greystone Books,

Book: *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* by Suzanne Simard, 2022, Knopf Doubleday

