

Farm bill authorization is quickly approaching! Now, we have a unique window of opportunity to build support for [marker bills](#) that have the potential to promote soil health and climate resilience, strengthen local and regional food systems (and farmers' markets 😊), and better support all of Ohio's farmers.

The coming 6-8 weeks are critical in shaping a farm bill that builds healthy communities, and we're excited about the opportunity to do so together! We invite you to join us in spreading the word about legislation with the potential to support an equitable, ecologically sound, and oh-so-tasty food system.

In an endeavor to support you and the communications efforts of farmers' markets across the state, this toolkit includes background information and templates that can be used to mobilize your communities and encourage them to contact their legislators. Feel free to tailor any of the below copy as you see fit, and point your readers or followers to the linked resources if they want to dive deeper. If you share something on social media, please tag us!

Instagram: [@OEFFApolicy](#)

Facebook: [Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association](#)

Twitter: [@OEFFA](#)

Kind regards,

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2023 FARM BILL PROMOTIONAL TOOLKIT

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About OEFFA

Formed in 1979, the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) cultivates a future in which sustainable and organic farmers thrive, local food nourishes our communities, and agricultural practices protect and enhance our environment.

To realize that vision, changes in state and federal policy are needed so family farmers can thrive in fair and transparent markets and can access the land they need to grow products to sustain community resilience. **OEFFA's [policy program](#) empowers people to enact that change.**

Overview

The farm bill shapes virtually every aspect of the U.S. food and agricultural system—what kind of food farmers grow, how it is grown, how much it costs, who has access to land and resources to farm, and what kind of farms are likely to succeed.

The current farm bill is set to expire on September 30, 2023. This means the coming months are critical, and provide our single greatest opportunity to realize a vision of a food system that is just, equitable, nourishing, and sustainable.

In 2022, OEFFA met with farmers and consumers across Ohio to learn about their vision for a sustainable food and farming system, revealing five key values which comprise the [OEFFA 2023 Farm Bill Platform](#).

It is made up of these broad planks:

1. Promoting soil health and climate resilience through conservation policy
2. Increasing investments in local and regional food systems
3. Addressing consolidation in the food and agriculture system
4. Investing in organic and sustainable research
5. Providing more support for beginning and BIPOC farmers

Key Marker Bills

Aligned with the values of cultivating care, being good neighbors, recognizing the intrinsic value of all living things, and building healthy communities, OEFFA has identified [key marker bills](#) that we strongly support and that you can help to advance. A marker bill is legislation that is introduced to advance policy proposals and assess their level of support, with the hope of making it into the first farm bill draft advanced by the leadership of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees.


 **Regularly-updated marker bill tracker:**
<https://action.oeffa.org/marker-bill-tracker/>

Social Media/Newsletter/Blog Content

1. Farm Bill Overview



THE US FARM BILL

The massive, multiyear piece of legislation that governs what we eat, how it's grown, and how much it costs. It controls how billions of taxpayer dollars influence our food and farm systems—and this year, it has the potential to be one of our biggest sources of climate action. 

Download for Instagram:  **1 - Farm Bill - INSTAGRAM.png**


Download for Facebook:  **1 - Farm Bill - FACEBOOK.png**

Sample social media copy:

Every bite of food is shaped by the farm bill, a large piece of legislation developed roughly every five years. It covers programs ranging from those that provide food access for low-income families to those that protect the natural resources that make growing food possible.

If you're an eater, the farm bill affects your life every day!

In addition to determining how farmers and nutrition programs are funded, the 2023 Farm Bill has the potential to be one of our greatest federal responses to the climate crisis. So, take some time to learn more about this critical piece of legislation. Make it a new dinner table topic!

 **Helpful resource:**

<https://sustainableagriculture.net/our-work/campaigns/fbcampaign/what-is-the-farm-bill/>

Sample newsletter blurb:

The farm bill is a package of legislation that was first enacted in the 1930s. It goes through a reauthorization process every five years. The current farm bill, also known as the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, is set to expire on September 30, 2023. Members of Congress are currently in the process of drafting the new farm bill!

Divided into 12 Titles, the farm bill is often referred to as the “food bill” because a significant chunk of its spending is dedicated to the Nutrition Title—which covers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other programs that help low-income families access food.

In addition to Nutrition, there are also Titles dedicated to:

- Commodities
- Conservation
- Credit
- Rural Development
- Research, Extension, and Related Matters
- Forestry
- Energy
- Horticulture
- Crop Insurance
- Miscellaneous

According to estimates from the [Congressional Budget Office](#), the 2018 Farm Bill will cost about \$428 billion at the end of its five years. Not only does this mean the farm bill matters from a taxpayer's point of view, but also because it has such a significant influence on what we eat and how it's produced. Going beyond the dinner table, the various Titles of the farm bill also influence things like wastewater treatment, farmland viability, renewable energy projects, and more. As such, the 2023 Farm Bill is expected to play a critical role in addressing the climate crisis.

To learn more about marker bills (introduced legislation that may make it into the farm bill) and how they can address consolidation, contribute to climate resilience, invest in local and regional food systems, promote organic research, and support beginning and BIPOC farmers, visit action.oeffa.org/marker-bill-tracker.

2. Agriculture Resilience Act (ARA)



Download for Instagram:  **2 - ARA - INSTAGRAM.png**

Download for Facebook:  **2 - ARA - FACEBOOK.png**


Sample social media copy:

Kudos to [@chelliepingree](#) for reintroducing the Agriculture Resilience Act (ARA) this year. According to the Maine congresswoman herself, “Farmers are on the frontlines of climate change. The changing climate necessitates urgent action, and farmers are an essential part of the climate solution.”


The 2023 Farm Bill MUST be a climate bill. Ask your representatives to cosponsor the ARA and support its inclusion in the new farm bill!

 **Helpful resource:**

<https://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/the-agriculture-resilience-act-in-2023/>

 **Senate text (S. 1016):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/1016?s=1&r=64>

 **House text (H.R. 1840):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1840/text?s=1&r=1&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22agriculture+resilience+act%22%5D%7D>

Sample newsletter blurb:

The Agriculture Resilience Act (ARA) is a comprehensive bill that addresses many of the ways farmers and eaters are experiencing—and contributing to—the climate crisis. As agricultural activities make up about 8-10% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, the ARA provides farmer-driven solutions to reduce agriculture's impact on the planet, while supporting farmers' ability to adapt, survive, and thrive.

This critical piece of legislation is centered around six policy areas:

1. **Increasing research** by increasing funding for USDA's Regional Climate Hubs, supporting breed research, and creating a program for demonstration grants.
2. **Improving soil health** by creating a new soil health grant and exploring new ways to reward farmers (i.e., tax incentives) for soil carbon sequestration.
3. **Protecting existing farmland** through projects that improve climate resilience and help local farmers reach new markets and make use of programs like the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program.
4. **Supporting pasture-based livestock systems** by creating new alternative manure management programs and helping very small meat processors cover inspection costs.
5. **Boosting investments in on-farm energy initiatives** through increased funding and new studies into the incorporation of renewable energy into cropping/livestock systems.
6. **Reducing food waste** through standardized food date labels, increased support for composting projects, and the creation of a USDA program to reduce food waste in schools.

Farming is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. But it can also be an important climate solution. If you are concerned about climate impacts, let your voice be heard! Spread the word about the ARA and let your members of Congress know that you'd like to see its incorporation into the 2023 Farm Bill.

3. Local Farms and Food Act (LFFA)

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We support local economies best when we produce more in Ohio - whether it's cars or produce or beef or flowers. Ohioans shouldn't have to buy apples from Washington when they could get them from Geauga County, or vegetables from Mexico when they could get them from a farm in Tiffin. This will help us build on our successes in past Farm Bills and make improvements to ensure Ohio farmers have the tools and support they need to sell their products in their own communities.

SENATOR SHERROD BROWN
Sponsor of the bipartisan Local Farms and Food Act



Download for Instagram:  **3 - LFFA - INSTAGRAM.png**

Download for Facebook:  **3 - LFFA - FACEBOOK.png**


Sample social media copy:

If you've been to a farmers' market in the past five years, it's likely your experience has been influenced by programs that fall under the umbrella of the Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP). This USDA program supports the development, coordination, and expansion of farmer-to-consumer sales AND strengthens local and regional food systems.


If it's incorporated into the 2023 Farm Bill, the Local Farms and Food Act (LFFA) will improve LAMP, making our regional food systems and local farmers' markets even better. Our very own @sensherrodbrown is behind this meaningful legislation. Encourage your representatives to follow suit by cosponsoring the LFFA!

 **Helpful resource:**

<https://news.oeffa.org/senator-brown-introduces-bipartisan-effort-to-help-ohio-farmers-support-local-economy/>

 **Senate text (S. 1205):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/1205?s=1&r=49>

 **House text (H.R. 2723):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/2723?s=1&r=4>

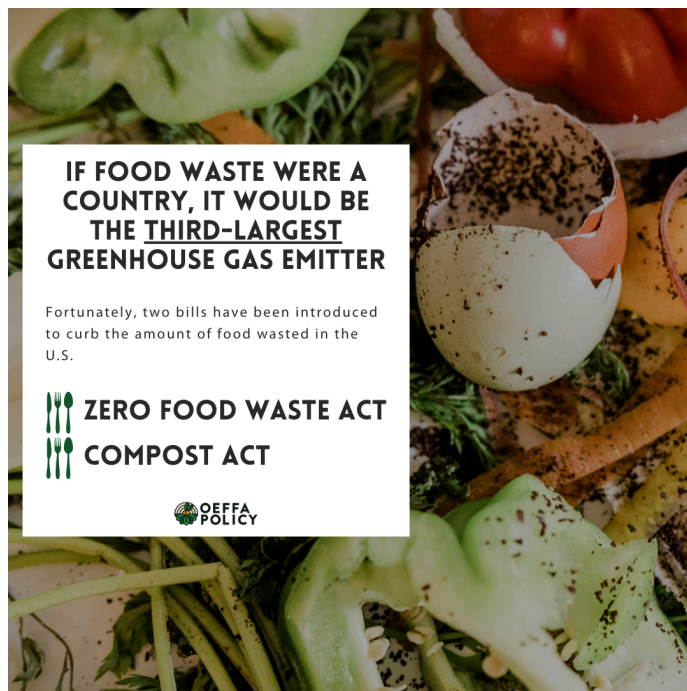
Sample newsletter blurb:

The Local Farms and Food Act (LFFA) will modify many of the USDA programs that have contributed to farmers' markets since the 2018 Farm Bill. Local food advocates and organizations have benefited from programs like the Farmers' Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP), the Regional Food Systems Partnership Program (RFPP), and the Value-Added Producer Grant program which are all part of the Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP).

What does this mean for your weekly trip to the farmers' market? The bipartisan LFFA would help to cultivate regional food commodities, support local food system infrastructure, strengthen capacity for community collaboration, and improve economic opportunities for local producers and food businesses.

For these reasons and more, Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown is sponsoring the Local Farms and Food Act! Let's get him some more support from members of Congress. For ways to take action before the current farm bill expires in September, check out some of the resources listed [here](#).

4. Zero Food Waste Act & COMPOST Act



Download for Instagram:  **4 - Food Waste - Instagram.png**

Download for Facebook:  **4 - Food Waste - FACEBOOK.png**

Sample social media copy:

Nearly half of all food produced in the U.S. is wasted or lost. Food waste makes up about a quarter of what ends up in landfills and costs the average household nearly \$2,000 a year.

Fortunately, the 2023 Farm Bill can be a driver for positive change. Through the Zero Food Waste Act and the Cultivating Organic Matter through the Promotion Of Sustainable Techniques (COMPOST) Act, communities could benefit from increased resources and projects aimed at reducing, recycling, rescuing, upcycling, and composting food waste. Reducing food waste and composting also have the potential to reduce harmful methane emissions that contribute to the climate crisis. And they create a valuable input for healthy soils!

But these bills need your help! Encourage your members of Congress to make food waste a priority in the new farm bill.

→ **Zero Food Waste Act Senate text (S. 177):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/177>

→ **COMPOST Act Senate text (S. 2388):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2388/text?s=4&r=2&q=%7B>

→ **Zero Food Waste Act House text (H.R. 652):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/652?s=1&r=50>

→ **COMPOST Act House text (H.R. 651):**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/651/text?s=5&r=1&q=%7B>

Sample newsletter blurb:

Two marker bills have been introduced to reduce the amount of U.S. food waste: the Zero Food Waste Act and the Cultivating Organic Matter through the Promotion Of Sustainable Techniques (COMPOST) Act.

The Zero Food Waste Act would create a new grant program to offer funding for projects that investigate, measure, or implement food waste reduction products. It could support initiatives that prevent, compost, and upcycle wasted food.

The COMPOST Act would include composting as a USDA conservation program, meaning that composting projects would be eligible for conservation grants. It would also create a new USDA grant and loan program for commercial, home, farm, and community-based composting projects.

Consider how an increase in composting projects would benefit your farm, home, or community. If you'd like to see efforts that curb the amount of wasted food in the U.S., be sure to ask your representatives to support the Zero Food Waste Act (H.R. 652) and COMPOST Act (H.R. 651) in this year's farm bill.

5. Farmers' Market and Food Bank Local Revitalization Act of 2023



Download for Instagram:  [5 - FMFBLRA - INSTAGRAM.png](#)


Download for Facebook:  [5 - FMFBLRA - FACEBOOK.png](#)

Sample social media copy:

Let's get some support for [@repmarcykaptur](#) and her Farmers' Market and Food Bank Local Revitalization Act of 2023!

The introduced bill has the potential to improve and expand initiatives that connect people with farmers' markets. It would increase funding for programs that distribute coupons to eligible seniors and families, helping them purchase food made and grown in their communities. Each year, 780,000 seniors and 1.2 million, infants, and children make use of these coupons.

Those numbers would be far higher with the Farmers' Market and Food Bank Local Revitalization Act of 2023!

 **House text (H.R. 2378):**

[congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/2378/text?s=6&r=1&q=%7B"search](https://congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/2378/text?s=6&r=1&q=%7B)

Sample newsletter blurb:


Championed by Ohio's own Representative Marcy Kaptur (OH-9), the Farmers' Market and Food Bank Local Revitalization Act of 2023 would support connections between farmers' markets and the communities they serve.

Not only would the bill increase funding for the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), which provides coupons to eligible families and seniors to purchase locally-grown food, but it would also establish a pilot program to help food banks procure food from local farmers.

According to Representative Kaptur herself, "By connecting farmers with even more of their neighbors, we will ensure those in need have a meal at the dinner table while uplifting the growers and producers who feed us all."

6. Opportunities for Action




Download for Instagram:  **6 - Advocacy Ideas - INSTAGRAM.png**

Download for Facebook:  **6 - Advocacy Ideas - FACEBOOK.png**

Sample social media copy:

With just weeks to go until Congress gets to work on our next farm bill, this time is critical for making your voice heard. Whether you're a tried and true policy nerd or a new concerned eater, there's a perfect action idea for you.

 Explore introduced marker bills on action.oeffa.org/marker-bill-tracker

- 🚩 Consider what YOU want to see in the 2023 Farm Bill (i.e., sustainability, improved food access, support for beginning farmers)
- 🚩 Spread the word on social media
- 🚩 Call your member of Congress
- 🚩 Write an op-ed or letter to the editor
- 🚩 Meet in-district with your member of Congress

Check out @OEFFApolicy for more ideas!

➡ **Resources for taking action:**

<https://action.oeffa.com/resources-for-action/>

➡ **Marker bill tracker:**

<https://action.oeffa.org/marker-bill-tracker/>

Sample newsletter blurb:

The time is ripe (*pun intended*) to make your voice heard! The farm bill is due to be reauthorized at the end of September, so now is the time to make sure your elected officials know how it can best support you and your community and cultivate a culture of care.

The 2023 Farm Bill can be part of the solution to the climate crisis, in addition to helping farmers and eaters around the country. But that will not happen without your support. Play a part in shaping this massive piece of multi-year legislation by:

- Getting to know the marker bills that may be incorporated in the farm bill
- Determining what's most important to you as a farmer, eater, environmentalist, community worker, or concerned citizen
- Spreading the word about the farm bill and introduced marker bills on social media
- Calling or emailing your member of Congress
- Writing an op-ed or letter to the editor
- Meeting in-district with your member of Congress

For support with any of these actions, send an email to policy@oeffa.org.
