

Info Alert

National Conference of State Legislatures Office of State-Federal Relations

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Fiscal Cliff Agreement Extends Parts of the 2008 Farm Bill

Included as part of the approved [“Fiscal Cliff” bill](#) were a number of provisions relating to continuation of programs that were part of the [2008 Farm Bill](#), which had previously expired on September 30. The bill also reauthorized a number of disaster assistance programs that had expired in 2011. However, one of the biggest changes in this bill, as compared to the 2008 Farm, is that all of the funding included for agricultural programs is entirely discretionary. [CBO estimated](#) that extending the agriculture portion of the “Fiscal Cliff” bill, including the disaster assistance programs, would be nearly \$5 billion in FY 2013.

With regard to the specific agriculture provisions, the bill extends current commodity terms and conditions for all commodities for the 2013 crop year as well as extending the current dairy and milk programs through Dec. 31, 2013. The bill extends the Conservation Reserve Program and the voluntary public access program. Research programs for specialty crops, organic agriculture and beginning farmers and ranchers were authorized at \$100 million, \$25 million and \$30 million, respectively. The bill also extends a number of energy related programs including the feedstock flexibility program, biomass crop assistance, rural energy for America and others. Disaster assistance programs were reauthorized for FY 2012 and FY 2013 and include \$80 million per year for livestock indemnity payments, \$400 million per year for livestock forage and \$20 million per year for tree assistance.

The bill also reauthorized level funding for two programs that are part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP’s employment and training programs were authorized at \$79 million in FY 2013 while the nutrition education and obesity prevention program was authorized with funding set at \$285 million in FY 2013 and rising to \$407 million in FY 2015. However, the bill did not extend authorization for programs including local and regional food aid procurement, the McGovern-Dole International Food Program or market loss assistance for asparagus producers.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the extension of the Farm Bill provisions, please contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Melanie Condon](#) (202-624-3597). For questions relating to SNAP, please contact [Emily Wengrovius](#) (202-624-8171).