



Farm Bill Energy Title

What is it?

Developed as part of the 2008 Farm Bill, the Energy Title provides critical support for the future of agriculture by offering funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects ranging from the development of the next generation of biofuels to renewable electricity generation in the form of digesters, wind, solar, and other technologies.

Why is it under threat?

The Joint Select Committee on Deficit reduction is charged with identifying \$1.5 trillion in budget cuts/revenue increases, but automatic cuts are triggered if less than \$1.2 trillion in cuts or revenue increases is achieved. If they fail to reach agreement and secure Congressional approval of their plan, the Budget Control Act of 2011 imposes across-the-board annual spending reductions, 50% on defense, 50% on discretionary non-defense, exempting entitlements, amounting to \$1.2 trillion by 2021.

Given this backdrop the leaders of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees are developing a framework to guide the development of the 2012 Farm Bill. The framework provides no mandatory funding for the Energy Title going forward, making its programs reliant upon an ever-shrinking pool of discretionary funding to survive from year to year.

Why is it important?

Farm Bill Energy programs:

- *Create jobs* – According to a recent analysis conducted by the University of Tennessee, achieving the goal of providing just 25% of our nation's energy from farms, forests, and ranches has the potential create 4.7 million new jobs and generate \$646 billion in new economic activity by 2025.
- *Strengthen our national security* – Energy Title programs support home-grown energy, reducing our reliance on energy sources from abroad.
- *Diversify our rural economy* – These programs provide agriculture with new and different sources of income for agricultural communities that provide returns for decades.
- *Unlock hundreds of millions of dollars in private investment* – Many of these programs match private investment, often less than dollar for dollar.
- *Create new, self-sustaining industries* - Unlike other programs, strong investment in the Energy Title will enable the young industries they support to eventually stand on their own.
- *Positively impact every state* – Energy Title programs have awarded funding for every state across the nation.
- *Improve our environment* – Programs supporting the development and deployment of renewable energy improve the quality of our air, water, and habitat.
- *Present a low-cost, high yield investment* – Despite all of benefits mentioned above, the Energy Title accounts for less than one percent of the total Farm Bill, making it a bargain.

What can I do to protect it?

The best way to protect the Energy Title is by writing, emailing, or faxing your federal elected officials to tell them that these programs are important to you and to urge them to:

1. *Focus on the future by maintaining an Energy Title in the Farm Bill; and*
2. *Provide mandatory funding to support its implementation.*

Please help us ensure that these first generation energy programs continue to serve as a base from which we can build a brighter future for agriculture!