

Amendment Offered by Mr. Riley

Brief Summary

This amendment creates a subprogram in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program for young and beginning farmers.

AMENDMENT TO _____
OFFERED BY MR. RILEY OF NEW YORK

Add at the end of section 10102 the following:

1 (d) SMALL FARM EQUIP SUBPROGRAM.—Section
2 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
3 3839aa–2) is amended—

4 (1) in subsection (d)—

5 (A) by striking paragraph (1) and insert-
6 ing the following:

7 “(1) AVAILABILITY; MINIMUM AMOUNT.—

8 “(A) AVAILABILITY.—A payment provided
9 to a producer under the program shall be used
10 to implement 1 or more practices under the
11 program.

12 “(B) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of
13 a payment provided to a producer under the
14 program shall be not less than \$2,500.”;

15 (B) in paragraph (2), in the matter pre-
16 ceding subparagraph (A), by striking “A pay-
17 ment” and inserting “Subject to paragraph
18 (1)(B), a payment”; and

19 (C) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(8) SOIL HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PAY-
2 MENTS.—

3 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding para-
4 graph (2), the Secretary shall increase the
5 amount that would otherwise be provided for
6 practices comprising a soil health management
7 system on a farm by 50 percent for any appli-
8 cation for a soil health management system on
9 an operation of not more than 50 acres.

10 “(B) RAPID AND STREAMLINED APPLICA-
11 TION AND CONTRACT APPROVAL.—The Sec-
12 retary shall provide payments under this para-
13 graph on a continuous enrollment basis, using
14 a rapid and streamlined application and con-
15 tract approval process.”;

16 (2) in subsection (f), by adding at the end the
17 following:

18 “(3) SMALL FARM EQUIP SUBPROGRAM.—

19 “(A) TOTAL FUNDING.—For each of fiscal
20 years 2026 through 2030, not less than
21 \$100,000,000 of the funds made available for
22 payments under the program shall be used to
23 carry out the subprogram established under
24 subsection (k).

1 “(B) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSIST-
2 ANCE.—Of the amounts made available under
3 subparagraph (A)—

4 “(i) 35 percent shall be used to ensure
5 the provision of tailored technical assist-
6 ance for small-scale agricultural producers
7 by—

8 “(I) hiring new Natural Re-
9 sources Conservation Service staff
10 who are familiar with the unique con-
11 servation challenges faced by small-
12 scale agricultural producers;

13 “(II) training current Natural
14 Resources Conservation Service field
15 staff regarding the challenges de-
16 scribed in subclause (I); and

17 “(III) ensuring sufficient Natural
18 Resources Conservation Service staff-
19 ing levels to deliver a streamlined and
20 expedited application and contracting
21 experience to small-scale agricultural
22 producers; and

23 “(ii) 65 percent shall be used to pro-
24 vide financial assistance directly to small-
25 scale agricultural producers.”; and

1 (3) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(k) SMALL FARM EQUIP SUBPROGRAM.—

3 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In each State, the Sec-
4 retary shall establish under the program a subpro-
5 gram, under which the Secretary shall—

6 “(A) provide financial and technical assist-
7 ance to small-scale agricultural producers that
8 enter into contracts with the Secretary under
9 the subprogram;

10 “(B) conduct outreach to small-scale agri-
11 cultural producers to increase participation in
12 the subprogram; and

13 “(C) provide to field staff of the Natural
14 Resources Conservation Service training and
15 education regarding the specific conservation
16 needs of small-scale agricultural producers.

17 “(2) PAYMENTS.—

18 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
19 determine whether a small-scale agricultural
20 producer is eligible to receive payments under
21 this subsection—

22 “(i) on a State-by-State basis, subject
23 to subparagraph (C);

24 “(ii) in consultation with the technical
25 committee established under section

1 1261(a) of the State in which the small-
2 scale agricultural producer is located; and

3 “(iii) based on—

4 “(I) the operations of a small-
5 scale agricultural producer, including
6 with respect to farm size and gross
7 sales;

8 “(II) demographic data compiled
9 by the National Agricultural Statistics
10 Service relating to small-scale agricul-
11 tural producers, including—

12 “(aa) historically under-
13 served farmers, ranchers, and
14 forest owners, including—

15 “(AA) veteran farmers
16 and ranchers;

17 “(BB) limited-resource
18 farmers, ranchers, and for-
19 est owners;

20 “(CC) beginning farm-
21 ers and ranchers; and

22 “(DD) socially dis-
23 advantaged farmers; and

1 “(bb) farmers, ranchers, and
2 forest owners operating in high-
3 poverty areas;

4 “(III) the applicable advanced
5 payment requirements under sub-
6 section (d)(4); and

7 “(IV) other relevant information,
8 as determined by the Secretary.

9 “(B) AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall pro-
10 vide payments under this subsection to a pro-
11 ducer that is eligible for the payments under
12 subparagraph (A) in such amount as the Sec-
13 retary determines—

14 “(i) achieves the purposes described in
15 subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph
16 (1);

17 “(ii) addresses natural resource con-
18 cerns relating to production on small-scale
19 agricultural operations; and

20 “(iii) is in accordance with any appli-
21 cable increased payment requirements
22 under subsection (d)(4).

23 “(C) SIZE REQUIREMENTS.—

24 “(i) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to
25 receive a payment under subparagraph (A)

(other than a payment described in clause (ii)), the farm size of an agricultural producer may not exceed the median farm size of the State in which the producer is located, based on aggregate data published by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

“(ii) LIVESTOCK AND PASTURE MANAGEMENT PAYMENTS.—To be eligible to receive a livestock or pasture management payment under subparagraph (A), the herd size of an agricultural producer may not exceed the median herd size of the State in which the producer is located, based on aggregate data published by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

“(3) APPLICATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive financial and technical assistance under this subsection, a producer that is eligible for the assistance under paragraph (2)(A) shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

1 “(B) ADMINISTRATION.—To the maximum
2 extent practicable, the Secretary shall limit the
3 administrative burdens, and the regulatory bar-
4 riers that contribute to administrative burdens,
5 on producers applying for payments under this
6 subsection.

7 “(C) RAPID AND STREAMLINED APPLICA-
8 TION AND CONTRACT APPROVAL.—The Sec-
9 retary shall provide payments under this para-
10 graph on a continuous enrollment basis, using
11 a rapid and streamlined application and con-
12 tract approval process.

13 “(4) SUBPROGRAM COORDINATORS.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
15 graph (B), the Secretary shall designate—

16 “(i) a national subprogram coordi-
17 nator; and

18 “(ii) a subprogram coordinator in
19 each State.

20 “(B) REQUIREMENTS.—At the time of des-
21 ignation under subparagraph (A), a national or
22 State subprogram coordinator shall be—

23 “(i) an employee of the Natural Re-
24 sources Conservation Service; and

1 “(ii) responsible for, on a national or
2 statewide basis, respectively—

3 “(I) public outreach relating to
4 the subprogram;

5 “(II) assisting producers in the
6 submission of applications under the
7 subprogram;

8 “(III) distributing financial and
9 technical assistance under this sub-
10 section; and

11 “(IV) submitting to the Secretary
12 annual recommendations with respect
13 to additional conservation practice
14 standards and activities required to
15 better serve small-scale agricultural
16 producers.

17 “(5) LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS.—The Sec-
18 retary shall publish any outreach materials for
19 small-scale agricultural producers relating to the
20 subprogram under this subsection simultaneously
21 in—

22 “(A) English; and

23 “(B) such additional languages as the Sec-
24 retary determines to be appropriate for each ap-
25 plicable State.

1 “(6) REPORT.—Not later than May 1, 2029,
2 the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Ag-
3 riculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and
4 the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Rep-
5 resentatives a report describing the results of the
6 subprogram under this subsection, including—

7 “(A) activities carried out under paragraph
8 (3)(B) to limit administrative burdens and reg-
9 ulatory barriers; and

10 “(B) to the maximum extent practicable,
11 demographic information relating to each small-
12 scale agricultural producer participating in the
13 subprogram, as the Secretary determines to be
14 appropriate.”.

