



## Farm Bill

### Background

The Farm Bill is a piece of comprehensive legislation that covers most federal government policies related to agriculture in the United States. The Farm Bill is intended to be passed every 5 years by the United States Congress and deals with a number of food and farming issues administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

First created during the Great Depression, the Farm Bill was intended to give financial assistance to farmers who were struggling due to an excess crop supply creating low prices, and also to control and ensure an adequate food supply. Today the Farm Bill covers a multitude of issue areas including: commodities; conservation; trade; nutrition; credit; United States rural development; research; forestry; energy; horticulture; crop insurance; and other miscellaneous items. New issue areas can be added to the Farm Bill during the re-authorization process. The latest iteration of the Farm Bill was reauthorized in December of 2018 and included a number of HF-supported provisions.

### Issues

- **Export Promotion:** The Hardwood Federation is a long-time proponent of full funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Markets Development Program (FMD), both administered by USDA. These programs provide essential resources to support the development of foreign markets for U.S. hardwood and hardwood products. The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) receives funding from both programs. Full funding for MAP and FMD are included in the 2018 Farm Bill at the \$200 million level for MAP and at \$34.5 million for FMD.
- **Timber Innovation Act (TIA):** TIA was originally a stand-alone piece of legislation strongly supported by the Federation. It is a measure that promotes use of wood in taller buildings—higher than 6 stories. TIA was folded into the Farm Bill in hopes of moving it forward and it was indeed included in the final legislation. The provisions in the measure include funds for both research and development as well as wood innovation grants.
- **Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovation Program (CWEIP):** CWEIP provides grants to projects that install high efficiency wood heating systems in hospitals, schools, community centers and entire towns. The 2018 bill authorizes \$125 million over the next 5 years to facilitate installations of heat and power systems that operate on sawmill residual-derived fuels. Although this program has been in existence for several years, it was authorized at only \$5 million per year and never received appropriations. The scope of the program has been broadened as well, such that capital improvements to sawmills would also be eligible for funding under CWEIP.
- **Federal Forest Management Reform:** Minor improvements were included in the bill, but the Federation will be pursuing more substantive reforms this year.

### Hardwood Federation Position

The Hardwood Federation advocates for full or increased funding for all the programs listed above as well as elimination to regulatory barriers that impede full implementation.