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Contact: Sue McGovern, sue@youngfarmers.org, 781-315-3400

**House Agriculture Committee concludes farm bill work without making necessary changes
for young farmers**

*Partisan markup yields heated debate, few amendments; NYFC calls on U.S. House to make
improvements as farm bill goes to the floor*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 18, 2018) – The House Agriculture Committee completed its markup of the House farm bill today and reported the bill to the full U.S. House. Despite a robust debate, the Committee made few changes to the bill, no moves to restore mandatory funding for programs critical to young farmers, and left key concerns over conservation, nutrition, and loan programs unaddressed. As the bill moves toward the House floor, the National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC) called on all Representatives to make significant changes.

“So few amendments offered to such an important and wide-ranging bill can mean only one of two things: either Members of the Committee think it’s near-perfect, or the House farm bill process is deeply troubled,” said Lindsey Lusher Shute, co-founder and Executive Director of NYFC. “Failure to pass a farm bill this year would be a significant setback for young farmers. While Congress sits in its committee room arguing, young farmers are putting everything on the line to grow food for the nation. Farmers need Members of Congress to back them up and support the programs that make a difference. We appreciate that the draft House bill addresses some of the challenges that young farmers now face, but it also eliminates programs that they rely on and further undermines their ability to compete.”

NYFC has praised the preservation of mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP), the Transition Incentives Program (CRP-TIP), and Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers (also known as the 2501 Program)

even as they continue to call for increased investments in those programs. They have expressed strong opposition to the elimination of mandatory funding for programs critical to young farmers entering the market, including the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP), the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program (NOCCSP), and Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG).

NYFC has also expressed serious concern about the overhaul of conservation programs in the bill, particularly as young farmers in the West brace for drought. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), USDA's largest conservation program, is effectively eliminated, and overall conservation spending is cut by billions. Lastly, the bill fails to incorporate components of NYFC's [Young Farmer Agenda](#) to improve implementation of USDA programs, including the establishment of state beginning farmer and rancher coordinators, modernizing customer service, and making progress to help young farmers manage student loan debt.

“Now that the Agriculture Committee has finished its work and voted this bill out, it's incumbent on every Member of the House to step up and make this a farm bill that meets the urgency of the moment,” Shute said. “Young farmers are counting on them.”

The National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC) is a national advocacy network of young farmers fighting for the future of agriculture. Visit NYFC on the web at www.youngfarmers.org, and on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).

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