



Biotechnology Innovation Organization
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March 16, 2022

The Honorable David Scott
Committee on Agriculture
Chairman
1301 Longworth HOB
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Glenn "GT" Thompson
Committee on Agriculture
Ranking Member
1010 Longworth HOB
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Thompson, and Members of the Committee:

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) is pleased to submit a statement for the record the United States House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture hearing entitled, "A 2022 Review of the Farm Bill: The Role of USDA Programs in Addressing Climate Change."

Introduction

BIO¹ represents 1,000 members in a biotech ecosystem with a central mission – to advance public policy that supports a wide range of companies and academic research centers that are working to apply biology and technology in the energy, agriculture, manufacturing, and health sectors to improve the lives of people and the health of the planet. BIO is committed to speaking up for the millions of families around the globe who depend upon our success. We will drive a revolution that aims to cure patients, protect our climate, and nourish humanity.

BIO supports testimony delivered at the hearing on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA). As a member of FACA, BIO believes that the Coalition's shared climate policy priorities, developed by organizations representing farmers, ranchers, forest owners, the food sector, state governments and environmental advocates, can greatly inform the work of the Committee.

Addressing Climate Change with Innovation

As Congress begins the process of authorizing the next farm bill, BIO applauds the Committee for exploring how climate change can be addressed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the farm bill.

Last year, when the Committee held its hearing, "Climate Change and the U.S. Agriculture and Forestry Sectors," BIO noted in its statement for the record² that to meet the challenge of climate change, it is crucial to lead with science and innovation.

¹ <https://www.bio.org/>

² <https://www.bio.org/letters-testimony-comments/bio-submits-testimony-first-climate-hearing-new-house-agriculture>



A farm bill centered on innovation stands to incentivize the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and practices, resulting in benefits to the environment and rural economies. Farmers, ranchers, sustainable fuels producers and manufacturers need comprehensive legislation, like the farm bill, to deliver a strong message; namely, biotechnology offers immediate and long-term answers to combat climate change. And to maintain U.S. leadership, programs must be supported by streamlined and expedited regulatory pathways for breakthrough technology solutions.

At its core, the farm bill promotes durability. The next farm bill offers a timely opportunity to examine innovation's influence on the resiliency of our economy in the face of global climate challenges. It also provides an unparalleled platform to grow trust in the innovation ecosystem, so more communities and consumers can embrace deployment of biotechnology with confidence and enthusiasm.

USDA Farm Bill and Climate Programs

BIO believes the government can and should play a catalytic role in providing guidelines for carbon markets. As the Committee examines how USDA programs can address climate change and interact with existing ecosystem markets, it should support government-established infrastructure to measure and verify carbon sequestrations at the local farm level. This will ensure both USDA programs and private markets will be successful and operate with credibility. It also will enable producers to invest in and adopt innovative technologies to reduce emissions and be properly rewarded.

Agriculture continues to play a positive role in tackling climate challenges- precision plant breeding, biostimulants, microbial inoculants, enhanced animal feed with enzymes- each of these cutting-edge innovations is reducing emissions and helping domestic producers adapt to a changing environment and bolster productivity. Carbon markets and other USDA programs must keep pace and continue to foster acceptance for new technologies, thereby protecting the stability of the agricultural supply chain.

However, without clear direction from USDA on its role, it is difficult for innovators to model the environmental benefits and leverage the financial resources needed to bring critical technologies to market. Additionally, it is virtually impossible for individual farmers, ranchers, or foresters to comprehend the myriad programs in the marketplace and readily assess the impacts to their own operations. If we want to realize the benefits of sequestering carbon dioxide in the soil, improving soil health, and protecting waterways, we must clearly define roles and responsibilities for both government and the private sector.

Conclusion

The agricultural innovations that BIO's member companies are developing will allow producers to sustainably provide the food, feed, fuel, and fiber needed for a growing world. The development and



deployment of these technologies will be crucial to helping farmers and ranchers be a part of the solution to climate change and provide them with the tools to be self-sustaining and resilient to a volatile climate.

BIO is committed to working with the Committee toward the development of the next farm bill that will address the climate crisis and support innovation in agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Gallo", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Sarah Gallo
Vice President, Agriculture and Environment
Biotechnology Innovation Organization