



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is responsible for providing nutrition assistance to low-income Americans and income support for the farm sector, and for conserving and preserving the Nation's forests and private agricultural lands. The President's 2023 Budget for USDA: invests in tackling the climate crisis while mitigating its ongoing impacts on communities; strengthens the food supply chain and nutrition safety net; advances environmental justice; creates new jobs and opportunities in rural communities; supports underserved farmers and producers; and restores America's advantage in agriculture.

The Budget requests \$28.5 billion in discretionary funding for USDA, a \$4.2 billion or 17.1-percent increase from the 2021 enacted level, excluding Food for Peace Title II Grants, which is included in the State and International Programs total. Resources provided through the 2023 Budget complement investments in conservation, forest management, and broadband deployment provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law).

The President's 2023 Budget:

- **Bolsters the Nation's Frontline Defenses against Catastrophic Wildfires.** Protecting communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure from wildfire requires a resilient and reliable Federal workforce. The Budget provides nearly \$4.9 billion for Forest Service Wildland Fire Management, including \$2.2 billion for the Wildfire Suppression Operations Reserve Fund. The Budget also upholds the President's commitment that no Federal firefighter would make less than \$15 an hour, increases the size of the Federal firefighting workforce, and provides critical technological support for wildfire detection and response, including FireGuard satellite imagery. The Budget also complements investments provided in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to reduce the risk and severity of wildfires through smart investments in Forest Service hazardous fuels management and ecosystem restoration.
- **Builds a Fair and Resilient Food Supply Chain.** The Budget strengthens market oversight through investments in the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, resulting in competitive meat and poultry product prices for American families and increased protection against invasive pests and zoonotic diseases. These programs build on the pandemic and supply chain assistance funding in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to address pandemic-related vulnerabilities in the food system and create new market opportunities and good-paying jobs.
- **Spurs Climate Research.** To support the Administration's whole-of-Government approach to tackle the climate crisis, the Budget invests \$24 million in USDA's climate hubs, a multi-agency

undertaking to leverage climate science and increase landowner awareness of—and engagement in—efforts to combat climate change. The Budget also supports multi-agency efforts to integrate science-based tools into conservation planning in order to measure, monitor, report, and verify carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas reduction, wildlife stewardship, and other environmental services at the farm level and on Federal lands. In addition, the Budget increases funding for priority climate research and for innovative mechanisms to incentivize the adoption of innovative agricultural practices and open new markets for climate-smart commodities at scale, while complementing actions being undertaken by stakeholders and the private sector.

- **Advances Equity and Environmental Justice.** The Budget supports the Administration’s ongoing work to advance racial justice and provide more equitable program delivery. Certain USDA programs and initiatives, such as High Cost Energy grants, Rural Energy for America grants and loan guarantees, Private Lands Conservation Operations, Urban Agriculture, and Water and Wastewater direct loans, would support the President’s Justice40 Initiative, which directs that at least 40 percent of the overall benefits from climate and clean energy investments be directed to historically disadvantaged communities. In addition, the Budget includes \$39 million for the Rural Partners Network, which would connect America’s rural communities to a broad range of programs and resources throughout the Federal Government. The Budget also provides \$31 million for USDA’s Office of Civil Rights, an increase of \$9 million over the 2021 enacted level.
- **Addresses Climate Change and Housing Insecurity in Rural Communities.** The Budget provides \$1.8 billion for USDA multifamily housing programs, an increase of \$259 million from the 2021 enacted level, including over twice the loan level as in 2021. This significant investment would help address housing insecurity, rent burdens, and the impacts of climate change in rural America, including through a new policy requiring construction practices to improve energy or water efficiency, implement green features, or facilitate climate resilience.
- **Helps Rural Communities Transition to Clean Energy.** Rural communities are critical to achieving the goal of transitioning to 100 percent zero carbon electricity by 2035. The Budget provides \$300 million in new funding for grants, loans, and debt forgiveness for rural electric providers as they transition to clean energy. The Budget also provides \$6.5 billion in loan authority for rural electric loans, an increase of \$1 billion over the 2021 enacted level, to support additional clean energy, energy storage, and transmission projects that would create good-paying jobs and meet the ambitious climate progress that science demands. In addition, the Budget includes \$15 million in new funding to support the creation of the Rural Clean Energy Initiative to help achieve the President’s decarbonation goals and ensure clean energy funding is implemented effectively in rural areas.
- **Restores America’s Advantage in Agriculture.** American farmers must be able to leverage new technologies to compete in world markets. The Budget provides \$4 billion, \$644 million above the 2021 enacted level, for USDA’s research, education, and outreach programs, including \$315 million targeted to under-served populations.
- **Connects All Americans to High-Speed, Affordable, and Reliable Internet.** The President is committed to ensuring that every American has access to broadband. High-speed internet strengthens rural economies, and the work of installing broadband creates high-paying union jobs. Building on the \$2 billion for USDA broadband programs provided in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Budget provides \$600 million for the ReConnect program, which provides grants and loans to deploy broadband to unserved areas, especially tribal areas. The Budget also provides \$25 million to help rural telecommunications cooperatives refinance their Rural Utilities Service debt and upgrade their broadband facilities.

- **Protects America’s Food Supply.** The Budget provides \$1.2 billion for the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), an increase of \$134 million from the 2021 enacted level. This funding would enable the hiring of more inspectors and Public Health Veterinarians, which would increase the strength and flexibility of FSIS to provide inspection services so that meat and poultry producers would be better able to respond to market demands and provide safe and healthy food products. The Budget is providing targeted funds to support smaller producers so that they may increase their production capacity, which in turn would create a more diverse food supply chain.
- **Invests in Tribal Communities.** The Budget invests \$62 million for agriculture research, education, and extension grants to tribal institutions; \$7 million to assist Native Americans with home ownership through the Single-Family Housing Native American Community Development Financial Institutions Re-lending Program, and \$7 million to support Native American farmers and ranchers through the Intertribal Assistance Network. In addition, through the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 and other authorities, the Forest Service would make initial investments of at least \$11 million in 2023 to increase equity and expand tribal self-governance, allowing Tribes to participate in restoration activities under agreements and contracts.
- **Supports a Strong Nutrition Safety Net.** The Budget provides \$6.8 billion for critical nutrition programs, including \$6 billion for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, to help vulnerable families put healthy food on the table and address racial disparities in maternal and child health outcomes.
- **Supports Economically Distressed Farmers.** USDA is committed to examining barriers faced by all underserved borrowers, especially those in economic distress, beginning farmers, and veterans. The Administration is interested in working with the Congress on legislative changes that would ease the debt burden for economically distressed farm loan borrowers to achieve a robust and competitive agriculture sector.
- **The 2023 Farm Bill.** The Administration looks forward to working this year with the Congress, partners, stakeholders, and the public to identify shared priorities for the 2023 Farm Bill that position USDA to live up to its moniker as “the People’s Department” and deliver on its mission to serve all Americans by providing effective, innovative, science-based public policy leadership in agriculture, food and nutrition, natural resource protection and management, and rural development. The Administration also looks forward to working with the Congress to address climate change through climate-smart agriculture and forestry and investments in renewable energy that open new market opportunities and provide a competitive advantage for American producers of climate-smart commodities, including small and historically underserved producers and early adopters, and through voluntary incentives to reduce climate risk. The 2023 Farm Bill is also a critical opportunity to ensure that the wealth created in rural America stays there and to empower rural communities with the tools necessary to advance their locally-led vision. In addition, USDA’s nutrition programs are among the most far-reaching tools available to improve health and well-being and to ensure that all Americans have access to healthy, affordable food. This is an important moment to reconsider barriers to food assistance for vulnerable groups that are likely undermining their chances of success, including low-income college students, individuals reentering society and seeking a second chance, youth who have aged out of foster care, kinship families, and low-income individuals in the U.S. Territories.