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NEWS

House appropriations bill includes reinstatement of NASS reports

A House appropriations subcommittee approved its fiscal year 2025 bill that includes language directing the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to reinstate all County Estimates for Crops, the July Cattle report and the Cotton Objective Yield Survey.

The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee approved the bill along party lines during a markup on June 11.

Citing budget constraints, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) NASS announced on April 9 that it would discontinue all county estimates for crops and livestock beginning with the 2024 production year. Thanks to the efforts of NGFA members, several key House lawmakers recognize the value of these reports to the entire U.S. agricultural value chain.

NGFA issued a statement on June 12 noting that these valuable reports aid competition and transparency by providing fundamental marketplace information for the agricultural sector.

"The NASS county crop estimates are critical to the operation of agricultural businesses," NGFA stated in a press release. "They are used to build supply and demand estimates, which help determine commodity sourcing plans to keep agribusiness facilities operational. NGFA members, including agricultural exporters, processors, and livestock feeders rely on these reports to participate in the export sales market and to make appropriate purchase decisions."

However, the appropriations bill approved by the committee will continue to face resistance from House Democrats due to spending cuts, including to food nutrition programs and the Food for Peace program. Notably, the bill reduces USDA and Food and Drug Administration funding by \$355 million from 2024 levels.

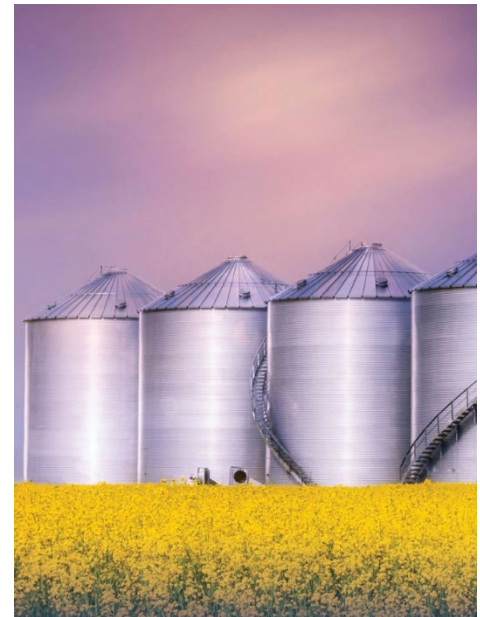
NGFA will continue working with lawmakers and USDA to reinstate the NGFA county crop estimates.

Senate Republicans release farm bill with key NGFA priorities

Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member John Boozman, R-Ark., on June 11 released a [farm bill framework](#) with several NGFA priorities, including increased funding for agricultural export promotion programs and an emphasis on working lands conservation programs.

He has not released the bill text, but the 13-page summary includes the following provisions:

- Maintains the 27-million-acre cap on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) with an emphasis on rental rate reform. It also increases funding for working lands conservation programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).
- Doubles funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture export promotion programs – the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) – which have not received an increase in funding since the 2002 farm bill.
- Includes the bipartisan Innovative Feed Enhancement and Economic Development (Innovative FEED) Act, which would establish legislative language for a new category of animal food additives. This NGFA-supported legislation would provide food manufacturers with a pathway to make non-misleading production and well-being claims for animal foods that have been substantiated to provide such benefits more efficiently.



Sen. Boozman’s draft also increases reference prices for Title I commodities by 15 percent. In line with the farm bill approved last month by the House Agriculture Committee, the senator’s draft proposes to restrict USDA’s Commodity Credit Corporation spending authority, require cost-neutral updates of the Thrifty Food Plan, and include Inflation Reduction Act conservation funding without restrictions for climate-related practices.

Meanwhile, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., said Sen. Boozman’s proposal “follows the same flawed approach as Chairman Thompson’s proposal in the House and splits the broad farm bill coalition.” She has said that changes to climate-related spending and reductions in food nutrition programs included in the Republican bills are non-starters for her and committee Democrats.

Chairwoman Stabenow released a 94-page [section-by-section summary](#) of her bill proposal on May 1, including a 5 percent increase in reference prices for cotton, rice and peanuts. She also has not released

bill text, but her summary includes an increase in the CRP acreage cap from 27 million acres to 29 million acres by 2029 and does not appear to include any additional funding for trade promotion programs.

The current farm bill extension expires Sept. 30.

OSHA sends heat standard to White House for review

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on June 11 sent its proposed rule on “Heat Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings” to the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) for [review](#).

OIRA reviews most proposed and final regulations before they are issued. The proposal text will not be released until the review is complete, which can take a few weeks to several months. In the meantime, more information about the agency’s goals is available on [OSHA’s website on the rulemaking](#). This site includes links to documents related to earlier steps in the rulemaking process - the [Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) (ANPRM) docket and [Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act \(SBREFA\) Panel documents](#).

NGFA submitted comments to the ANPRM and the SBREFA panel opposing the one-size-fits-all standard that is overly complicated and lacks the necessary flexibility for employers to determine and implement appropriate controls to protect their employees.

The primary concern with the rulemaking is that it will place an undue regulatory burden on grain handling facilities in indirect (employee time) and direct costs (equipment) and additional paperwork requirements. Some examples include: 1) additional paperwork burdens related to monitoring and recording the proposed initial heat (80°) or high heat index (87°) in numerous locations throughout a facility both indoor and outdoor; 2) retrofitting facilities and purchasing new equipment related to ventilation and thermometer measurement (wet bulb) in outdoor environments; and 3) acclimation and employee training, preparedness and equipment, to name a few. In addition, OSHA does not specifically identify what is defined as “indoor” and/or “outdoor;” therefore, it is difficult to determine what should be done in each circumstance to address the issue.

Once OIRA completes its review, OSHA will publish the proposal for public comment, followed by another review, leading to potential finalization by the summer of 2025.

CISA requests industry feedback on cybersecurity services

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) is seeking responses to the [Critical Infrastructure Pilot Customer Survey](#), which will inform the selection of cybersecurity services offered by CISA to critical infrastructure organizations, including agribusinesses.

“This survey represents an important opportunity to make your equities and needs known,” CISA stated in an email to critical infrastructure organizations.

Congress has directed CISA to provide scalable commercial cybersecurity shared services to the critical infrastructure community to detect and prevent cybersecurity threats and mitigate vulnerabilities to improve America’s risk posture. CISA said it requires more feedback to determine how best to support critical infrastructure organizations.

The [survey link](#) closes on **July 8**.

EVENTS

CONVEY'24 early bird rate ends June 17

The early bird discount rate for registration at [CONVEY '24](#) ends on Monday, **June 17!**

CONVEY'24, an annual conference jointly hosted by NGFA, Grain Journal, and the Grain and Elevator Processing Society (GEAPS), is July 23-25 in Omaha, Neb.

Each year, NGFA, GEAPS and Grain Journal present this unique opportunity for grain handling employees and leaders to gain practical knowledge and training on real-world compliance issues, best practices and emerging industry trends. This year's program explores the intersection of safety and new technology.

CONVEY'24 will feature NGFA partners Joe Mlynek, founder of **Progressive Safety Services, LLC**, and partner at Safety Made Simple; and Kristin Ireland, co-founder of **People Spark Consulting**.

- During CONVEY'24, Mlynek will co-host a panel on “Serious Injury and Fatalities (SIFs) Potential and Prevention Strategy” on July 25. In this session, Mlynek and Anne Cook, safety director at Custom Agri Systems, Inc., will look back on the death of a coworker and the shift that occurred after this tragic event.

NGFA has partnered with Mlynek for safety program consulting and resources. In addition to hosting a webinar series for NGFA, Mlynek will complete the publication of a new Safety and Health Manual for the grain, feed and processing industry as well as a new Safety Tip Sheets.

- Ireland will host the “Onboarding and Training Best Practices” discussion on onboarding and training new employees on July 25.

NGFA has partnered with People Spark Consulting to offer leadership programs throughout the year and to each NGFA Committee Apprentice Program “Year 2” member.

New this year: NGFA-member company DEGESCH will host a pesticide state-certification workshop on the afternoon of July 23. The workshop is officially certified for 4 CEU credits in Kansas, Colorado, Ohio, Michigan, Texas, Indiana, and Oklahoma. Additional registration is required.

Register for NGFA's June 18 safety webinar

NGFA will host a grain safety webinar on “[Understanding Hazardous Atmospheres in Agriculture](#)” with Joe Mlynek, founder of Progressive Safety Services, LLC, and partner at Safety Made Simple, on **June 18 at 1 p.m. ET.**

During the webinar, Mlynek will discuss hazardous environmental risks associated with agricultural confined spaces. Topics include exposure limits, symptoms, and safety protocols like air monitoring and ventilation. He will cover the symptoms of exposure to environments with low oxygen, carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and flammable gases and vapors.

[Please register](#) to attend this webinar.



Mlynek is hosting a series of grain safety webinars throughout 2024 as part of a new partnership with the NGFA. Another webinar on “Serious Injury and Fatalities (SIFs) in the Grain and Feed Industry” is scheduled for Nov. 14.

Mlynek is a Certified Safety Professional (CSP) and an Occupational Health and Safety Technician (OHST), as well as an active member of the NGFA, Grain Elevator and Processing Society, Ohio Risk Coordinators, National Fire Protection Association, and American Society of Safety Professionals.

SUPPLEMENTS

OSHA issues notice on safety and health of outdoor workers

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently issued an industry-wide notice to help employers and workers with training and resources before exposures to environmental stresses occur.

“It is important for employers to consider the impacts of extreme weather on the safety and health of outdoor workers. Increasing average temperatures and changing weather patterns are just as much a threat to construction workers as to response and recovery workers,” OSHA noted. “The risk of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities among outdoor workers is higher when exposed to heat and other hazards.”

OSHA included the following information on heat exposure:

“Each year, [thousands of workers become sick](#) due to occupational heat exposure, and some die. New employees who have not had the chance to adjust to working in the heat are the most vulnerable. [Three out of four heat-related](#) workplace fatalities occur in the first week on the job.

“The agency’s [Heat Illness Prevention Campaign](#) provides heat hazard resources to keep workers safe, including information for [employers](#), [workers](#), and [more](#). Help is available to employers who need to create a heat illness prevention plan, train workers, and provide first aid for heat illness. Workers gain insight on workplace rights, heat illness prevention, and heat illness signs and symptoms. Many of the resources are available in multiple languages.

“The OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool [App](#) is a tool for everyone! It allows workers and supervisors to calculate the heat index for their worksite, and, based on the heat index, displays a risk level to outdoor workers. OSHA has a newsletter that highlights heat-specific information and new resources ([sign-up](#)).

“OSHA published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) for Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings (see Federal Register) in October 2021, and completed additional steps in the rulemaking process more recently, including gaining input from small entity representatives, and [briefing the Advisory Committee for Construction Safety and Health](#).

“The agency continues to conduct heat-related inspections under its [National Emphasis Program – Outdoor and Indoor Heat-Related Hazards](#), launched in 2022. The program targets workplaces with the highest exposures to heat-related hazards. Since the launch, OSHA has conducted nearly 5,000 federal heat-related inspections in addition to offering compliance assistance and outreach.”



Register for next People Spark leadership training by June 21

The deadline to register for the June 2024 leadership program hosted by People Spark Consulting is June 21.

NGFA members receive a **bonus private coaching session** with their Leadership Transformation Program® registration. New cohorts begin monthly throughout 2024. [Click here for information!](#)

The investment for the 12-month People Spark Leadership Transformation Program® is \$2,500. Use reference code: NGFA

NGFA and People Spark Consulting have partnered to further the mission to provide education and training to members at all levels in the agriculture industry. The [People Spark Leadership Transformation Program®](#) is a year-long course that focuses on practical application of leadership skills and tools. It starts with an 8-week intensive training, followed by 10 months of ongoing support to reinforce and sustain the learned skills.

Extra Supplements

NGFA in the news:

Feed & Grain: [House subcommittee approves bill to reinstate reports](#)

Goodway: [Safeguard Grain Facilities with Explosion-Proof Vacuums](#)

Landus Cooperative: [Rural Matters Partnership Spotlight: National Grain and Feed Association](#)

South Dakota War College: [US Senator Mike Rounds Weekly Round\(s\) Up for June 3-9, 2024](#)

Sen. Jerry Moran blog: [Remembering D-Day 80 Years Later - Kansas Common Sense](#)

Other news:

Trains: [Port of Baltimore reopens main channel](#)

Reuters: [Two dozen companies working to find bird flu vaccine for cows, US agriculture secretary says](#)

Associated Press: [Senate confirms new energy regulators, extending Biden's grip on panel that backs renewable energy](#)

Politico: [House agriculture spending bill shuns climate, conservation](#)

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