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Beyond Pesticides

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Senate GOP Farm Bill Tees Up Fight Over Protections in Agriculture, the Environment, and Food Security

WASHINGTON, DC, June 24, 2026—Yesterday, Senator Boozman (R-AK), chair of the Senate Agriculture, Forestry, and Nutrition Committee, released the [Senate GOP Farm Bill](#), the *Agricultural Act of 2026*, with provisions that undermine public and environmental health, according to farm, farmworker, and environmental advocates. Rather than investing sufficiently in organic agriculture and supporting farmers' transition to nontoxic practices—in response to health, biodiversity, and climate crises, as well as the high cost of synthetic fertilizers—the bill reduces oversight of organic production by loosening inspection and certification requirements.

“The bill, drafted without input from Senate Democrats, redefines underlying statutory standards, increasing dependency on petrochemical pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture at a time when we urgently need to shift to sustainable and cost-effective agricultural and land management practices,” said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides, a national public interest group representing farmers, consumers, and environmentalists. “We are facing health and environmental crises, demanding leadership—not exhibited in this Republican Farm Bill—that ensures a livable future,” Mr. Feldman said.

The text is largely the same as the version passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in April, the *Farm, Food and National Security Act of 2026* (H.R. 7567). The House vote made history when 73 Republicans joined the majority of the Democratic caucus to strip out a pesticide manufacturers' liability shield (Section 10205), federal preemption of state and local pesticide laws (Section 10206), and the weakening of bedrock environmental law and their ability to regulate pesticides (Section 10207). [A decision is expected this week or next in a case before the Supreme Court, *Monsanto v. Durnell*, in which Bayer/Monsanto argues that they have no responsibility under pesticide law to have warned on their product labels those who have been harmed by product use.]

The Senate GOP Farm bill will adversely affect a wide range of social and conservation issues, including the protection of family farms, food security, and environmental and public health, according to a cross-section of groups representing these interests. Overall, critics say, the Republican bill increases dependency on petrochemical fertilizers (which contribute to escalating toxic pesticide use), ignores hunger (despite a historically large \$186 billion cut to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/SNAP), dismisses the notion of a fair, responsible, and accessible family farm safety net, and

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rolls back successful conservation investments. A markup on the Senate Farm Bill is expected before the Senate's August recess.

Poison Pill Provisions in Senate GOP Bill

Subtitle B, Part 1, of Title X, entitled Regulatory Reform, contains the following provisions that weaken the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), undermine environmental protections, and threaten the health of farmers, farmworkers, and consumers.

- **Section 10201 [Section 10201 in House bill]: Exemption of safety review.** Permanently exempts dozens of hazardous chemicals used in industrial agriculture from human health and environmental safety reviews that are currently required under the *Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act*. In addition, by expanding the incorporation of biological material in plants as pesticides, with Plant Incorporated Protectants (PIPs), target and nontarget organism resistance builds, undermining the value of organic-compatible materials in organic agriculture.
- **Section 10203 [Section 10203 in House bill]: Weakens protection of endangered species.** Undermines the integrity of the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) in an unprecedented manner by delaying protections for threatened and endangered species against dangerous pesticides by giving an internal interagency workgroup a de facto veto on any efforts to protect endangered species from pesticides. The provision will certainly delay and weaken critical conservation measures despite the “no take” prohibition under the ESA for threatened and endangered species.
- **Section 10207 [Section 10204 in House bill]: Pushes the deadline for pesticide reviews and years of missing critical safety reviews.** Delays the review of hundreds of pesticides for harms to human health, endangered wildlife, and endocrine disruption until 2031, leaving potentially dangerous pesticides on the market and in widespread use without any updated protective measures.
- **Section 10209 (Section 10202 in House bill): Diminishes and delays regulatory authority under pesticide law.** Weakens and delays efforts to protect children, farmworkers, and public health from dangerous pesticides by giving unprecedented authority to the USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy and pesticide manufacturers to review and potentially veto any environmental or human health safeguards determined to be necessary by EPA. Undermines health-based standard for the setting of allowable pesticide residues (tolerances) in food by considering availability of alternative chemicals.
- **Section 10210 [Section 10211 in House bill]. Threatens the collection of information on farming practices.** Discontinues statutory funding of the previous Farm Bill for surveys that provide baseline information to communities and farmers to inform practices and outcomes—particularly problematic during a period of severe budget cuts and agency dismantling.

Additional poison pill sections that remain in the Senate draft version include:

- **Focus on Precision Agriculture as the Alternative Food System Approach:** The Senate Farm Bill—throughout the Conservation Title (Title II), including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program subtitle (Subtitle B), the Credit Title (Title V), in the Rural Development Title (Title VI), in the Research Title (Title VII), and the Miscellaneous Title (Title XII) —will codify continued reliance on petrochemical fertilizers through the promotion of “precision agriculture.” With the use of drones, satellites, and artificial intelligence, precision agriculture is touted by the industry and USDA as a great environmental achievement, focused on soil biology and lower or variable application rates of petrochemical pesticides and fertilizers—but ignores the dramatic damage it causes to soil biology, complex biological communities, and the economic value of healthy ecosystems and ecosystem services that naturally cycle plant nutrients.
- **Closing of USDA Beltsville National Bee Laboratory and Related Research.** This Farm Bill does not address the USDA reorganization plan, including the devastating implications of shutting down research facilities at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) in Beltsville, Maryland, including the [Bee Research Laboratory](#) (aka Bee Lab). [Maryland's Congressional delegation has pointed out](#) that the closing of BARC is also illegal. By moving forward with the decommissioning of BARC, USDA is violating several provisions laid out in the Fiscal Year 2026 *Agriculture Appropriations Act*, enacted into law on November 12, 2025, including a clear directive to USDA to keep BARC open.
- **SNAP Cuts Remain in this Bill.** The Senate GOP Farm Bill would continue to codify the initial statutory changes from last summer’s reconciliation bill [H.R.1](#), including shifting the costs to state governments while minimizing cost-share from the federal government from 50 percent to 25 percent, expanding work requirements to 64 years of age from 54 years of age, prohibiting non-citizens from accessing the program, among other deleterious impacts that could be address in this legislation.

Poison Pill Provisions to Monitor

While the most toxic sections of Subtitle C, Part 1, of Title X, were stripped from the House-passed version of the bill, it is important to note that there may be attempts to include the following type of language from the original House Agriculture Committee bill into the Senate version through the conference committee process:

- **Section 10205:** Immunizes pesticide companies from their duty to warn the public about dangerous chemicals in their pesticide formulations, potentially eliminating access to the federal courts for thousands of individuals with cancer, Parkinson’s disease, and other health issues scientifically linked to pesticide exposure.
- **Section 10206:** Eliminates the six-decade-old authority of state and local governments to implement additional local and state-focused restrictions on the use of dangerous pesticides to

protect children, farmworkers, pollinators, public health, and the environment.

- **Section 10207:** Erases important, long-standing safeguards to protect people and wildlife from pesticide pollution discharged directly into waterways through the Clean Water Act Pesticide General Permit (“PGP”), and includes broad language that would exempt pesticide approvals from the *Endangered Species Act*, *Clean Air Act*, and other bedrock environmental laws.

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Beyond Pesticides is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., which works with allies in protecting health and the environment with science, policy, and action to lead the transition to a world free of toxic pesticides. Learn more at <https://www.beyondpesticides.org/>.