



OHIO ECOLOGICAL FOOD AND FARM ASSOCIATION 2023 FARM BILL PLATFORM

PROMOTING SOIL HEALTH AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE THROUGH CONSERVATION POLICY

OEFFA members believe that it's essential to our future to invest in the health of our soil and build climate resilience through conservation programs in the 2023 Farm Bill.

When federal programs cultivate equity and invest in—rather than exploit—our shared and finite resources, we build strength and resilience necessary for long-term agricultural sustainability and we create a foundation for a good life for everyone in our community.



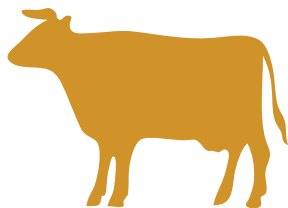
Ohio Agriculture Under Threat

Farmers, who build intimate knowledge of their land over time, have witnessed the effects of a changing climate. Ohio farmers are experiencing flooded fields, heat stress on crops and livestock, and property damage from severe weather.

Scott Myers of Woodlyn Acres Farm has seen heavy rain events firsthand on his farm. He notes the rising cost of drainage tile as demand grows from other flooded farmers, and recalls local snow ploughs being used to clear streets after summer storm damage.

“Climate change is actually happening,” Myers said. “It doesn’t matter which side of the political landscape you’re on, we all need to agree it’s going to be a real issue that we have to deal with and our children need to deal with.

And it’s very important that we do something about it.”



Field-Tested Climate Solutions

Current agricultural practices cause about 10 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. For example, when soil is left bare without roots to hold it in place, erosion causes carbon to be released into our atmosphere.

Yet, **farmers are a critical part of systems-based solutions to climate change.** Organic farming and good soil health practices—like cover cropping and



Scott Myers grows about 2,500 acres of hay, corn, soybeans, sunflowers, peas, and small grains in Wayne County, Ohio utilizing organic and no-till practices.

long-term, diverse crop rotations—help to sequester carbon in the soil, while building the resilience farmers need to adapt to more frequent weather extremes and provide a stable food supply for our communities.

When Myers first transitioned to organic production and began planting cover crops for year-round ground cover, he saw immediate benefits to his corn yields because the wheat, barley, and rye were “holding soil and nutrients on the land rather than those nutrients going into the watershed.”





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Rising to the Challenge Together

Because climate solutions take all of us working together, acting as good neighbors and acknowledging our shared responsibility to future generations, OEFFA supports increased access to resources and technical assistance that make it easier for all farmers to be good stewards of the land.

Demand for current conservation programs has long exceeded funding, with 50 percent or more of farmers who apply turned away each year. Carie Starr applied for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) many times, but has not received funding, and she learned that very few pasture programs are funded in the state.

“In order to mitigate climate change, we need to financially incentivize small farmers growing healthy and safe food,” Starr said.



Carie Starr of Cherokee Valley Bison Ranch rotationally grazes bison on 50 acres in Perry County, Ohio, helping to regenerate the landscape.

The 2023 Farm Bill should invest in successful conservation programs sought by farmers like Carie, including EQIP, the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Grazing Land Conservation Initiative (GLCI). It should also fund the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program (NOCCSP) and state soil health programs.



THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

The farm bill shapes virtually every aspect of the U.S. food and agricultural system. The 2023 Farm Bill is our single greatest opportunity to realize our vision for a future where sustainable and organic farmers thrive, local food nourishes our communities, and agricultural practices protect and enhance our environment.

Democracy belongs to all of us, and it's up to us to advocate for strong policies that benefit our whole community and the Earth. Your voice is needed to make sure government and public institutions are accountable and exercise their responsibility to protect our health and well-being and support natural ecosystems.

To join us in calling for farmer-focused climate solutions in the 2023 Farm Bill, including EQIP, CSP, GLCI, NOCCSP, and state soil health programs, go to action.oeffa.com/farm-bill.

