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**Committee Releases the Fiscal Year 2014 Agriculture
Appropriations Bill**

***Legislation will support American farmers and ranchers, sustain food
and drug safety efforts, and trim unnecessary spending***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The House Appropriations Committee today released the fiscal year 2014 Agriculture Appropriations bill, which will be considered in subcommittee tomorrow. The proposed legislation funds important agricultural and food programs and services, including food safety, animal and plant health programs, rural development and farm services, marketplace oversight, and nutrition programs.

The bill totals \$19.5 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$1.3 billion below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and approximately equal to the current level caused by automatic sequestration spending cuts. This total is \$516 million below the President’s request for these programs.

“We rely on American farmers and ranchers to provide us with the food and products we need every day. This bill will fund critical agricultural programs to support our farmers and ranchers, ensure the safety and sustainability of our food and drug supply, and offer some needed help to families who are facing the dangers of hunger. And we do all of this while keeping a tight hold on spending and trimming unnecessary funds to make the most of every tax dollar,” House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers said.

“America’s farmers, ranchers, and producers are vital to our nation’s economy and are the most competitive in the world. They create jobs in our communities, produce food for our tables, export products around the globe, and diversify our nation’s energy supply,” Subcommittee Chairman Robert Aderholt said. “The funding in this bill will help keep America’s agricultural research cutting-edge, maintain vibrant rural communities, provide nutrition to those most vulnerable, and keep our markets competitive while maintaining the safest food and drug supply in the world. At the same time, this bill honors our commitment to be good stewards of taxpayers’ limited dollars.”

Bill Highlights:

The agencies and programs in this bill will receive a total of \$139.4 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding – \$2.6 billion below the President’s request and \$52 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level.

The programs funded in this bill, including agriculture production, promotion, research, and marketing, will help build upon the estimated \$139.5 billion in U.S. agricultural exports this year – the highest level on record. These exports support more than one million American jobs and are essential to the nation’s continued economic growth.

Agricultural Research – The bill provides \$2.5 billion for agriculture research programs, including the Agricultural Research Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. This is approximately equal to the fiscal year 2013 enacted funding level. This funding will support research to help stop and mitigate devastating crop diseases and improve food safety and water quality. The bill also maintains responsible investments in the nation’s land-grant colleges and universities.

Animal and Plant Health – The legislation includes \$803.5 million – approximately equal to the fiscal year 2013 enacted level – for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. This funding will provide support for programs to help control or eradicate plant and animal pests and diseases that can be crippling to U.S. producers and entire agricultural industries.

Conservation Programs – The bill provides \$823 million – \$2.3 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level – for the Natural Resources Conservation Service to help farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners conserve and protect their land. This includes \$12 million in conservation funding for dam rehabilitation to help small communities ensure their small watershed projects meet current safety standards.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) – The legislation provides \$1.5 billion for FSA, which is equal to the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. This funding will support the various farm, conservation, loan, and emergency programs for American farmers and ranchers

Rural Development – The bill provides a total of \$2.2 billion for rural development programs, which is equal to the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. These programs help

create an environment for economic growth by supporting basic rural infrastructure, providing loans to increase opportunities for rural businesses and industries, and helping balance the playing field in local rural housing markets.

- **Business and Industry Loans** – The legislation includes \$52 million – \$3.1 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level – for the rural business and industry loan program. This funding will support \$741 million in loans to help small businesses in rural areas, many of which face unique challenges due to local economic conditions.
- **Rural Infrastructure** – The legislation includes responsible investments in basic rural infrastructure needs. This includes \$1.2 billion for rural water and waste program loans and \$448 million for grants, \$5.2 billion for rural electric and telephone infrastructure loans, and \$24 million for Distance Learning and Telemedicine grants, which address educational and health needs in rural communities.
- **Rural Housing Loans and Rental Assistance** – The bill provides a total of \$24 billion in loan authority for the Single Family Housing guaranteed loan program (equal to the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and the President's request), and \$820 million in direct loans (\$80 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level). These loans provide low-income rural families – many of whom would have few loan options for purchasing a home because of their geographical location – with home loan assistance. In addition, \$1 billion – \$128 million above last year's level – is provided for rental assistance to provide affordable rental housing for low-income families and the elderly in rural communities.

Food Safety and Inspection Service – The legislation includes \$999 million for food safety and inspection programs – which is \$31 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. These mandatory inspection activities help ensure the safety and productivity of the country's \$832 billion meat and poultry industry, and keep safe, healthy food on American tables. The funding provided will maintain more than 8,000 frontline inspection personnel for meat, poultry, and egg products at more than 6,200 facilities across the country.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – The FDA receives a total of almost \$2.5 billion in discretionary funding in the bill, an increase of \$24 million above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. Total funding for the FDA, including revenue from user fees, is \$4.3 billion. Within this total, food safety activities are increased by \$27 million, and drug safety activities are increased by \$2.5 million.

Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) – Included in the bill is \$195 million for the CFTC, the agency’s current operating level, which is a cut of \$10 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and \$120 million below the President’s budget request.

Food and Nutrition Programs – The legislation contains discretionary funding, as well as mandatory funding required by law, for food and nutrition programs within the Department of Agriculture. This includes funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Child Nutrition programs.

- **WIC** – The bill provides \$6.7 billion in discretionary funding for WIC, which is \$214 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and \$487 million below the President’s request. This program provides supplemental nutritional foods needed by pregnant and nursing mothers, babies and young children. Language is included for oversight and monitoring requirements to ensure the proper use of taxpayer dollars, including a directive for the Secretary of Agriculture to increase oversight of vendors to help rein in food costs.
- **Child nutrition programs** – The bill provides for \$20.45 billion in required mandatory funding – which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee – for child nutrition programs. This is \$561 million above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. This funding will provide for an estimated 5.6 billion free or reduced-price school lunches and snacks for 32.1 million children who qualify for the program.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** – The bill provides for \$76.3 billion in required mandatory spending – which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee – for SNAP. This is \$958 million below last year’s level and \$2 billion below the President’s budget request. This program provides food assistance to more than 45 million Americans on average every month. Strong oversight language is included requiring the Secretary of Agriculture to report on actions to help weed out and eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in the program, such as a directive to ban fraudulent vendors, and a prohibition on advertisements or outreach with foreign governments.
- **International Food Programs** – The legislation contains \$1.15 billion for “Food for Peace” grants, also known as the P.L. 480 – Title II program. This is \$284 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. The bill does not reflect the President’s budget request to move this program to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

For the text of the subcommittee draft bill please visit:

<http://appropriations.house.gov/UploadedFiles/BILLS-113HR-SC-AP-FY2014-Agriculture-SubcommitteeDraft.pdf>