

# NYFEA UPDATE

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## A FARM BILL SUMMARY

The new Farm Bill is a similar sized document to its predecessor. However, it does have certain first-time features. The following are highlights to the 10-year bill:

It is a \$965.4 billion bill that amounts to around 2 percent of all federal spending over the decade.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is a major part of the bill. It helps low income families buy food. The total food stamp and nutrition portion of the bill consists of \$765 billion in spending over 10 years. Likewise, the bill has a component that encourages people that are on food stamps to pursue jobs.

The commodity program contains \$44.4 billion over 10 years. It reduces the previous farm bill's amount by \$14 billion. It is designed to protect farmers from the sharp "ups and downs" in the prices of the corn, wheat, soybean, cotton, rice, peanut and dairy products. The new commodity program policy replaces the traditional "direct payments." This is arguably the most dramatic change in the farm bill. To replace the direct payment, the bill establishes additional disaster assistance and crop insurance programs. The removal of direct payments carved \$19 billion from the old farm bill's expenditures. The new bill provides \$90 billion for crop insurance and adds \$7 billion for subsidies for the deductibles that farmers would have to pay before the insurance would be allowed to work.

Conservation programs received \$57.6 billion to protect against erosion, encourage irrigation and promote more production on less land. Trade received \$3.5 billion to promote United States goods overseas and provide food aid and technical assistance in other nations. Energy programs have \$1.1 billion in the bill. They promote the use and development of biofuels, biochemicals, etc.

Finally the 10-year bill has a number of smaller pro-



## THANKS TO THE TEXAS INSTITUTE COMMITTEE

grams totaling around \$2.3 billion. These range from forestry to rural development to farmers markets to research and development. Like all bills of this size, the content is too enormous to summarize everything. However this article does identify the major components.

*(Information for this article was taken from The Washington Post summaries of the Farm Bill.)*

Join your friends and agricultural peers in Washington D.C. for the Agriculture's Promise conference. Held on March 2-4, it will help open the eyes of the participants and show interested young and beginning farmers "how the process works." It will include discussions on the Farm Bill. It is open to all interested individuals.

Register at [www.nyfea.org](http://www.nyfea.org)





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## ***From the Alamo to the hill country see the sights and sounds of San Antonio!***



**The Alamo**



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### **HIGHLIGHTING: INSTITUTE TOURS**

#### **Thursday**

THIS IS A SCHOOL WORTH VISITING BECAUSE ... What was once a small struggling program geared towards the traditional ag courses has become a model for school districts throughout the country. Located just a couple of miles inside Loop 1604 is an oasis and one of the best examples of adapting to a changing environment that can be found in the region. It is the Agriscience Magnet Program (AMP) at Madison High School. The AMP, home to the James Madison Chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) serves as a cornerstone of the surrounding community. It celebrates the community's agriculture heritage through acknowledgement of local resources such as animal farming, food product harvesting, education with regard to area's resources and lack thereof (water, solar, animal, plant). It also provides students opportunity to contribute to the community through hands on practice while also learning the economic impact of agriculture industry.

**RIVERWALK** - Spending the afternoon in beautiful Downtown San Antonio you will see the historic "Alamo", famous "Riverwalk" and the classic "Mercado" (Mexican Market). You will be dropped off to spend the afternoon seeing what interests you most. The [San Antonio River Walk](#) is a public park, open 365 days a year. It is a network of walkways along the banks of the San Antonio River, one story beneath approximately 5 miles of downtown San Antonio. Lined by bars, shops and restaurants, the River Walk is an important part of the city's urban fabric and a tourist attraction in its own right. The River Walk winds and loops under bridges as two parallel sidewalks, lined with restaurants, shops, hotels and more.

#### **Friday**

JOHNSON CITY, mainly a ranch trade center, had a steady tourist business from its origins. Though the number of businesses dropped from twenty in 1914 to seven in 1933, it rose to forty-two in the mid-1950s, when the town was incorporated. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Johnson was president of the United States, the major income in Johnson City came from the tourist industry, and the num-

ber of businesses rose to fifty-two. By 1986 the number had dropped to twenty-six. The town's newspaper, the Record-Courier, was established in 1883. The population fluctuated from 400 in 1925 to 950 in the late 1940s, and from 660 to 800 between the late 1960s and the mid-1980s. Johnson City continues to be mainly a tourist center. In 1990 the population was 932.

"All the World is Welcome Here" ---Lyndon Baines Johnson- LYN-DON B. JOHNSON NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK tells the story of our 36th President beginning with his ancestors until his final resting place on his beloved LBJ Ranch. This entire "circle of life" gives the visitor a unique perspective into one of America's most noteworthy citizens by providing the most complete picture of any American president. <http://www.nps.gov/lyjo/index.htm> President Johnson had a deep attachment for place and heritage. The LBJ Ranch was where he was born, lived, died, and was buried. After the President's death in 1973, Mrs. Johnson continued to live at the Ranch part time until her death in 2007. Visitors are now able to tour the Ranch at their own pace in their private vehicle with the ability to stop at sites along the way such as the President's birthplace, Johnson family cemetery, and the Johnson's ranch house known as the Texas White House.

The mission of the Lady Bird Johnson WILDFLOWER CENTER is to increase the sustainable use and conservation of native wildflowers, plants and landscapes. [http:// www.wildflower.org/about/](http://www.wildflower.org/about/) . Decades ago, Mrs. Johnson recognized that our country was losing its natural landscapes and its natural beauty. As much as 30 percent of the world's native flora is at risk of extinction. The Wildflower Center was intended to help preserve and restore that beauty and the biological richness of North America. Since then, the Center has become one of the country's most credible research institutions and effective advocates for native plants. The **Center's** gardens display the native plants of the Central Texas Hill Country, South and West Texas, while the Plant Conservation Program protects the ecological heritage of Texas.