STATE OF THE AMERICAN FARMER



January 2026

MODERN AG ALLIANCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 4

01 MODERN FARMING OVERVIEW 5

02 ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AND CHALLENGES 9

03 REGULATORY LANDSCAPE AND CHALLENGES 12

04 WHAT CAN POLICYMAKERS DO? 15

REFERENCES 19







A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





Elizabeth Burns-Thompson

Growing up on a small family farm in eastern Iowa, I was shaped by rural America: the early mornings, the unpredictability of markets and weather, and the constant pressure to do more with less. My commitment to American agriculture is grounded in the experiences I had throughout a life that has always revolved around agriculture.

Over the years, I have witnessed firsthand how modern technology is transforming the way we grow our food, fuel, fiber, and foliage. While farming remains one of the most challenging businesses to sustain, technological advancements, including mechanization, synthetic fertilizers, and pesticides, have made growers more competitive.

The Modern Ag Alliance was born out of an existential need to protect farmers' access to modern inputs, ensuring rural America has what it needs not only to survive, but to thrive. Our coalition, which includes more than 110 partner organizations nationwide, reflects a broad swath of the farmers who feed, fuel, and clothe us. Together, we work to ensure farmers have access to innovations, technologies, and crop protection tools, like pesticides, that enable them to meet rising global demand while stewarding their land for future generations.

Over the past year, the Alliance undertook a comprehensive effort to reaffirm and deepen our understanding of what farmers face today. We consolidated economic data, analyzed trends from leading agricultural organizations, and, most importantly, listened to growers themselves. From these conversations, a clear picture emerged of the American farmer, it's one of adversity but fervent strength in the face of some of the most significant headwinds in a generation.

Our analysis revealed several themes: growing financial strain, global competition, tightening regulatory pressures, and increasing uncertainty about whether the tools farmers depend on today will remain available tomorrow. These pressures don't just affect the success of a single growing season; they weigh heavily on the long-term sustainability of family farms and rural communities in every corner of America.

Taken together, these themes underscore a straightforward need: farmers need certainty, and one way to provide it is to ensure the tools they rely on remain available. This isn't just about the tools of today, but about a regulatory environment that spurs innovation to bring the next generation of tools to farmers. As we look to 2026, the Modern Ag Alliance will remain steadfast in its mission: advocating for policies that protect access to critical crop protection tools and pushing back against regulatory decisions that disregard the lived experiences of America's farmers.

What I see today in agriculture reflects a growing and troubling reality: our farmers are hurting. Across the country, agricultural production is being targeted by activist campaigns seeking to eliminate the tools farmers rely on—often without regard for on-farm realities or the consequences for food production. I'm committed to ensuring that farmers across the country have the certainty and support they need to continue feeding, fueling, and strengthening this country.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

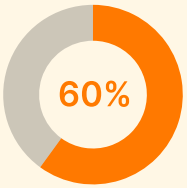
American agriculture is facing one of its most challenging periods in a generation. Economic pressures and activist campaigns against modern agriculture have created conditions where even the most resilient operations are feeling strain. These pressures extend well beyond the farm gate, driving price instability across the economy for the food, fuel, and fiber that depend on agricultural production.

In its 2026 State of the American Farmer report, the Modern Ag Alliance draws on the history of innovation, economic data, surveys, farmer testimonials, and policy analysis to provide a comprehensive picture of where American agriculture stands today and how protecting farmers' tools will help secure our future.

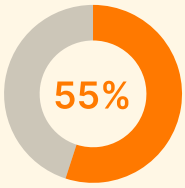
Farmers Face Mounting Economic Pressure

- **Profitability:** Only about half of farmers expected to be profitable in the past year.
- **Commodity prices:** Key crops have seen price declines as high as **58%** since 2022.
- **Production costs:** More than half of farmers report cost increases in several key inputs, as labor and tariff-related expenses continue to climb.
- **Bankruptcies:** Farmer bankruptcies have seen a **60%** year-over-year increase, surpassing 2024 totals by mid-2025.

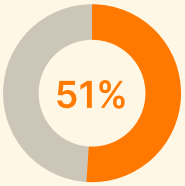
Farmers' Outlook on the Future Is Mixed—with Growing Concern



Say farming may "cease to exist as we know it" without a course correction.



Feel confident passing down their family farm to the next generation.



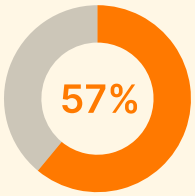
Feel confident recommending their career to their children.

Regulatory Uncertainty and Disconnected Policymakers Are Making a Hard Situation Harder

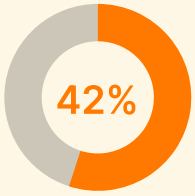
Decades of U.S. policy positioned agriculture for success through modernization and science-based regulation. But today:

- **Inconsistent state-level requirements,** such as those in California, conflict with federal labeling laws, threatening the availability of proven crop protection products.
- **Farmers want to be consulted on the policy and regulatory changes** that impact their livelihoods.

The Consequences of Losing Access to Modern Tools Are Significant



Expect higher input costs.



Anticipate increased regulatory or legal burdens.

Additionally, **60% of farmers classify stricter product labeling as among the top issues** with the most detrimental impact. Without modern pest-management tools, yield losses could **exceed 50%** for major crops like corn and soy, losses that farmers cannot absorb in today's challenging environment.

Farmers' conditions and consumer affordability are inextricably connected. When farmers face rising costs and shrinking margins, those pressures ripple through a large swath of the economy, impacting food, fuel, and clothing, leading to higher prices for American families.

The growing farm crisis underscores the need for policymakers to pass a new Farm Bill that addresses affordability challenges for farmers and consumers, and provides regulatory certainty for farmers and innovators of crop protection tools.



Section 01

MODERN FARMING OVERVIEW

MODERN FARMING OVERVIEW

Farming has long played a central role in the American economy, but to understand the challenges farmers face today, it is essential to examine the industry's evolution over the past century.[1] This section outlines the realities of the farming landscape before the mechanization, modern practices, and innovations that have reshaped farm work today.

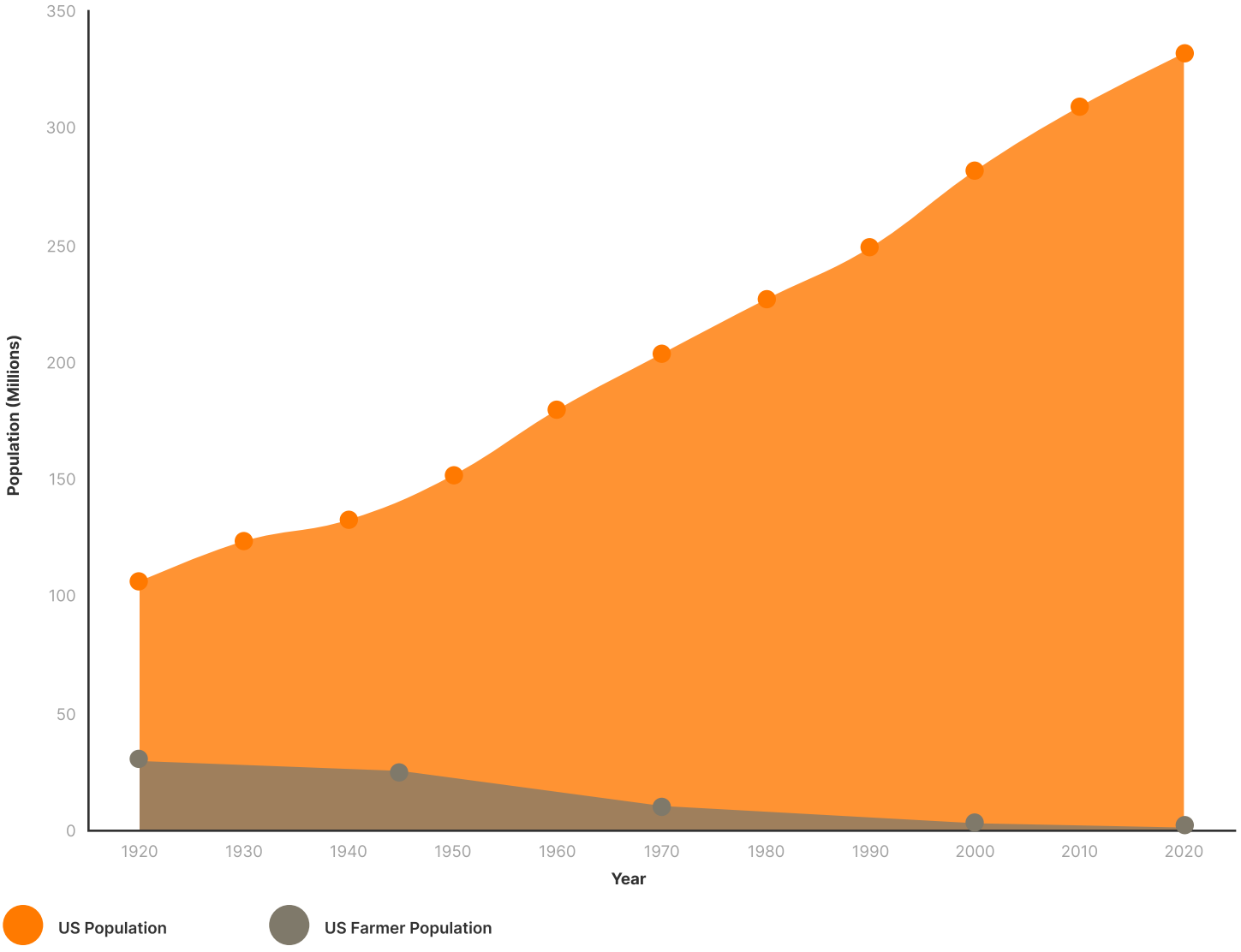
Farming Before the Modern Agricultural Era

Early twentieth-century farming looked vastly different than the agricultural economy we know today. Farmers relied heavily on manual and animal-powered labor to till fields, planting seeds without modern equipment, and hauling supplies by horse. Production was labor-intensive, physically demanding, and constrained by the limits of human and animal capacity.

The U.S. population also saw rapid expansion over the next two centuries, growing from just over 100 million people in the 1920s to slightly above 200 million in the 1970s, and to nearly 350 million in the 2020s.[2] This increased demand for food, fuel and fiber placed mounting pressure on a farming workforce that once made up a substantial share of the country. In 1920, **roughly 30%** of Americans worked in agriculture; today, **fewer than 2%** do.[3] And yet, these producers are responsible for supporting a much larger population and meeting a growing demand for food globally.

These demographic shifts made one thing clear: productivity gains driven by technological advancements were essential to sustain a growing population.

A Century of Change: Growing Population, Shrinking Farm Workforce



Source: US Census, New York Times, American Farm Bureau, Banks, V. J. & Beale, C. L., Banks, V. J., Beale, C. L., & Bowles, G. K, and American Demographic History Chartbook[4]

The Innovation Revolution: How Technology Saved the Farm

The foundations of modern agriculture emerged in the mid-20th century, when new technologies began replacing the labor-intensive practices that defined earlier generations of farming. This era marked a decisive shift from manpower-driven production to a system built on efficiency and innovation.

Four advancements, in particular, transformed the agricultural landscape:

Seed Genetics: Advances in plant breeding, especially the development of hybrid seeds and improved crop varieties, marked a critical turning point for agriculture. By deliberately selecting and crossing plants for traits like higher yields, disease resistance, and uniform growth, plant breeders dramatically increased the productivity and reliability of major crops.

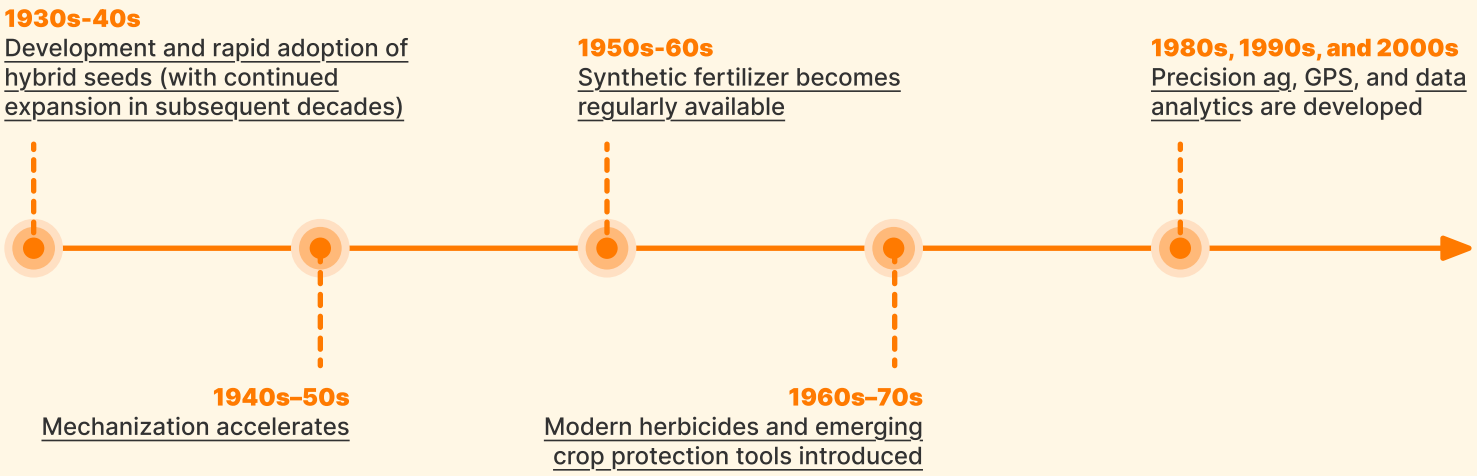
Mechanization: New equipment—tractors, combines, and planters—replaced human and animal labor with machines capable of working faster, longer, and more precisely. These machines allowed farmers to manage dramatically more acres with fewer workers, fundamentally reshaping farm operations.

Synthetic Fertilizers: Advancements in fertilizers enabled farmers to replenish soil nutrients reliably and efficiently, breaking historical limits on soil productivity. By providing key nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, synthetic fertilizers drove dramatic increases in yields and made large-scale food production possible.

Crop Protection Tools: Herbicides and other new chemistries enabled farmers to protect crops from weeds, insects, and diseases, threats that historically caused significant and unpredictable losses. These innovations stabilized yields and reduced risk, helping producers maintain productivity across varying environmental conditions.

Additional Innovations: Later advancements, including biotechnology, GPS-guided equipment, and data analytics, further increased precision, efficiency, and sustainability, enabling farmers to produce more with fewer resources.

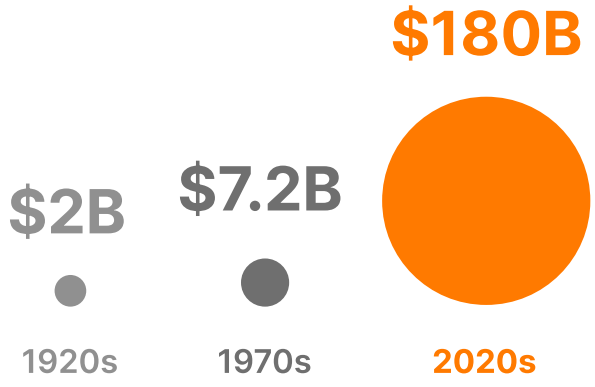
The Emergence of Modern Agriculture



Source: USDA Economic Research Center, Wessels Living History Farm, PBS, Modern Ag Alliance, American Farm Bureau, National Academies, Purdue University[5]

How Modern Agriculture Transformed Productivity

Technological advancements dramatically expanded U.S. production capacity and positioned American farmers to compete in, and ultimately help supply, global markets. Adjusted for inflation, U.S. agricultural exports grew from roughly $2 billion per year in the 1920s to about $180 billion per year in the 2020s.[6] By the 1970s, when modern crop protection tools were becoming widely adopted, inflation-adjusted agricultural exports had reached approximately $7.2 billion—before accelerating sharply in the decades that followed.[7] This surge in productivity enabled the U.S. to feed a rapidly growing population at home while contributing to unprecedented levels of global food access in the twenty-first century.



Farmers can attest to the impact of these innovations, particularly those who farmed before their introduction. Doug Ruff, an Idaho potato and sugar beet farmer, described his experience with leading pesticides:

> **Glyphosate was a huge addition to our farm.** We used to cultivate our crops at least three times, if not four, and then come back, hill and dike. In between all that cultivation, we would run these little four-wheelers, which we called beta mix sprayers. They were 100-gallon sprayers we'd pull behind the four-wheelers, and would race up and down the fields. I'd have two guys, and that was their only job, just to keep those four-wheelers going and keep the spray going. The chemicals we sprayed back then, we used quite a mix and would have to go about every 10 days to two weeks, spraying. And every time we sprayed with those chemicals, it would cause some injury to those beets, but we had to live with it to try to get the weeds. **Since glyphosate was introduced, we've been able to park those four-wheelers and been able to stop doing all that spraying. We've been able to cut back on our cultivation running through the field. And with glyphosate, we usually only have to spray twice a year. That's it.** It's really made a huge difference for us. And the plus is that there's been no crop injury with the glyphosate."
>
> — Doug Ruff, Idaho Farmer

Doug's story illustrates a central outcome of modern agriculture: sustained gains in productivity allow farmers to grow more with less labor, land, and inputs.



Section 02

ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AND CHALLENGES



ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AND CHALLENGES

While innovations in modern agriculture have transformed farmers' capabilities, they haven't insulated them from the broader economic hardships facing the nation. Rising costs, volatile markets, and limited pricing power have left farmers absorbing many of the same pressures confronting American families, tightening margins and straining farm operations nationwide.

America's Affordability Crisis

The U.S. is confronting a broad and intensifying affordability crisis.[8] Rising prices across key sectors—from food and housing to childcare and healthcare—have strained households nationwide, with low- and middle-income Americans feeling the most significant pressure.[9] In a recent Politico poll, **56%** of respondents described the cost-of-living crisis as a top issue facing the nation.[10] Food prices, in particular, are weighing heavily on household budgets, with **45%** of respondents in the same poll citing groceries as the most challenging to afford. The data support these perceptions: according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, grocery prices have risen by **nearly 30%** over the past five years, further straining households.[11]

For consumers, rising grocery bills often feel sudden and disconnected, but these increases are not arbitrary. They are the downstream result of mounting pressures that begin long before food reaches store shelves. Without access to important innovations like crop protection tools, the affordability crisis will only worsen. A study by Aimpoint Research shows that without access to the most commonly used herbicide in the world, food inflation would surge by 2.4 times and consumers could expect a $10 billion increase in food costs—a reality they cannot afford.[12]

The affordability crisis facing American families is inseparable from the economic realities confronting America's farmers. Understanding what consumers experience at the grocery store requires examining what farmers are experiencing in the field, where rising production costs, falling commodity prices, and tightening margins are converging into one of the most challenging farm economies in recent memory.

Our Farmers Face Declining Profitability, Falling Commodity Prices, and Rising Costs

America's affordability crisis has had especially severe consequences for U.S. agriculture. As grocery prices rise and household budgets tighten, many of the same forces driving those costs—higher fuel prices, labor shortages, rising input expenses, and economic uncertainty—are bearing down on farmers *first*.

Farmers are facing some of the lowest profitability levels in recent history. According to a recent Farmer Mac poll, the share of farms turning a profit has dropped sharply.[13] While average profitability has hovered **around 80%** in prior years, reports from 2025 anticipated a decrease in profits to just **52%**.[14] The rapid decline is further evident in an exponential increase in farmer bankruptcies, with **about a 60%** increase from 2024 to 2025, according to U.S. Bankruptcy Court filings.[15] These statistics are not just numbers on a ledger; they represent an erosion of an entire sector of our economy. In a recent 60 Minutes special, Tennessee farmers described the ramifications of the war on food, noting that "the morale in the farming industry, not just farmers, is the lowest" they've ever seen.[16] Their experience demonstrates how the severe profitability losses are impacting our farmers' well-being.

One contributing factor to poor profitability is declining commodity prices. Since 2022, key crops such as cotton, soybeans, corn, and wheat have experienced price declines of **up to 58%**, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).[17] One driver of decreased commodity prices is reduced market access.[18] Tariff-related trade tensions can weaken international demand for U.S. crops, contributing to the problem.[19]



33% Experience tariff impact.[20]

45% Experience declining commodity prices.[21]

65% Say these price pressures have had the most negative impact on the agricultural industry.[22]

As Blake Hurst, a Missouri corn and soybean farmer, explained:

> Probably the biggest challenge we're facing is just the decline in commodity prices from **almost a 50%** decline in the prices of the things we grow...we've seen a combination of a really large crop this year and a decline in exports because of our various trade controversies have meant the prices have dropped. And that's putting a squeeze on the squeeze on profits."
>
> — Blake Hurst, Missouri Farmer

Both the data and on-the-ground stories from farmers paint the same picture: falling commodity prices are worsening the crisis that American farmers are experiencing.

Another factor is the rise in production expenses. Production costs have increased significantly, with industry-wide increases across the board, according to USDA statistics.[23] Farmers report higher prices for essential inputs like fertilizer which have seen record high prices since 2022.[24] Labor shortages that add operational strain, and tariff-related cost increases that make imported materials more expensive are also contributing to overall increased production costs.

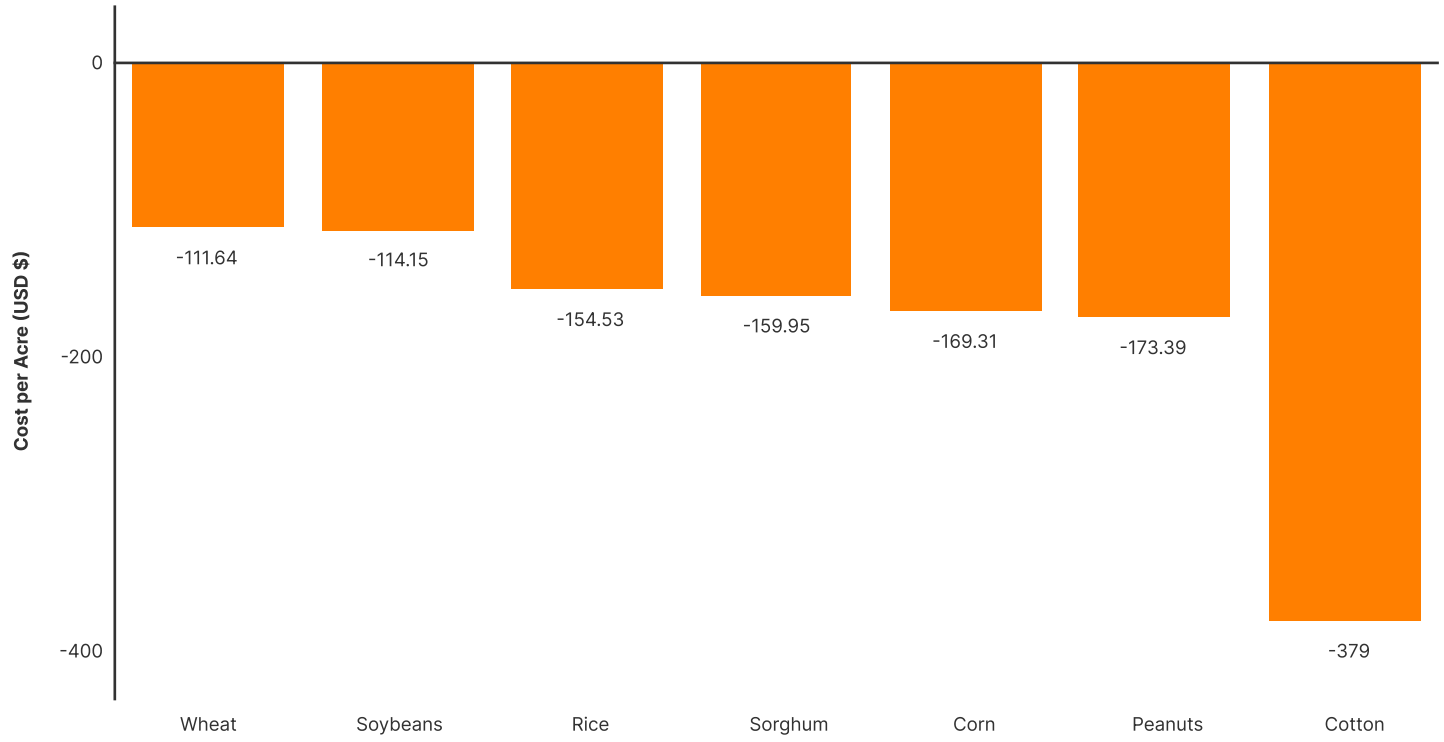


56% Experience rising costs of farming inputs.[25]

74% Say those rising costs are having the most negative impact on the agricultural industry.[26]

According to USDA statistics, the average 2025 per-acre profitability figures are:

A Row Crop Crisis



Source: USDA Statistics (via AFBF)[27]

In December 2025, President Trump announced a $12 billion package to support farmers through this crisis. While this will provide some relief, it is only a temporary remedy for a sector experiencing long-term structural pressures. Farmers are expected to incur more than $44 billion in losses from their 2025-2026 crops.[28]

These pressures fall most heavily on family farms, which make up **roughly 95%** of all U.S. farms.[29] Unlike larger operations, family farms cannot easily absorb additional costs. When commodity prices fall and input costs rise simultaneously, families are forced to take on debt, delay succession plans, or exit farming altogether. In a competitive business landscape, as profitability erodes, the long-term viability of the family farm model itself is increasingly at risk.

The growing farm crisis underscores the need for policymakers to pass a new Farm Bill that addresses affordability challenges for farmers and consumers, and provides regulatory certainty for farmers and innovators of crop protection tools.

Section 03

REGULATORY LANDSCAPE AND CHALLENGES



REGULATORY LANDSCAPE AND CHALLENGES

Economic pressures are not the only factors pushing many operations to the brink. Inconsistent application of the laws governing modern farming practices threatens to make these challenges even more severe.

For more than a century, the U.S. government has played a central role in shaping the agricultural landscape. Early involvement focused on foundational tasks, such as defining land ownership, distributing property, and building infrastructure that enabled farming communities to grow. As agriculture continued to scale and populations expanded, federal policy evolved to stabilize markets and ensure consistent food security across the nation.

By the mid-20th century, Washington broadened its support through subsidized access to credit, crop insurance programs, and substantial investments in agricultural research. These policies fueled rapid modernization and productivity gains across rural America.

During this same period, the introduction of new technologies, including modern crop protection tools, became essential for efficiently controlling pests, helping farmers grow more with fewer resources.

Today's policy environment continues to shape the farm economy. Federal programs such as crop insurance, conservation incentives, and disaster assistance provide critical stability for producers navigating unpredictable markets and rising costs. It is clear the government still has a role to play: **45%** of farmers say increased financial assistance would be beneficial, **38%** say improved crop insurance programs would most help their farms, and **30%** point to decreasing regulatory burdens. **But, across the board, eight in ten farmers agree that they should be consulted on the operational impacts of new regulations.**[30]

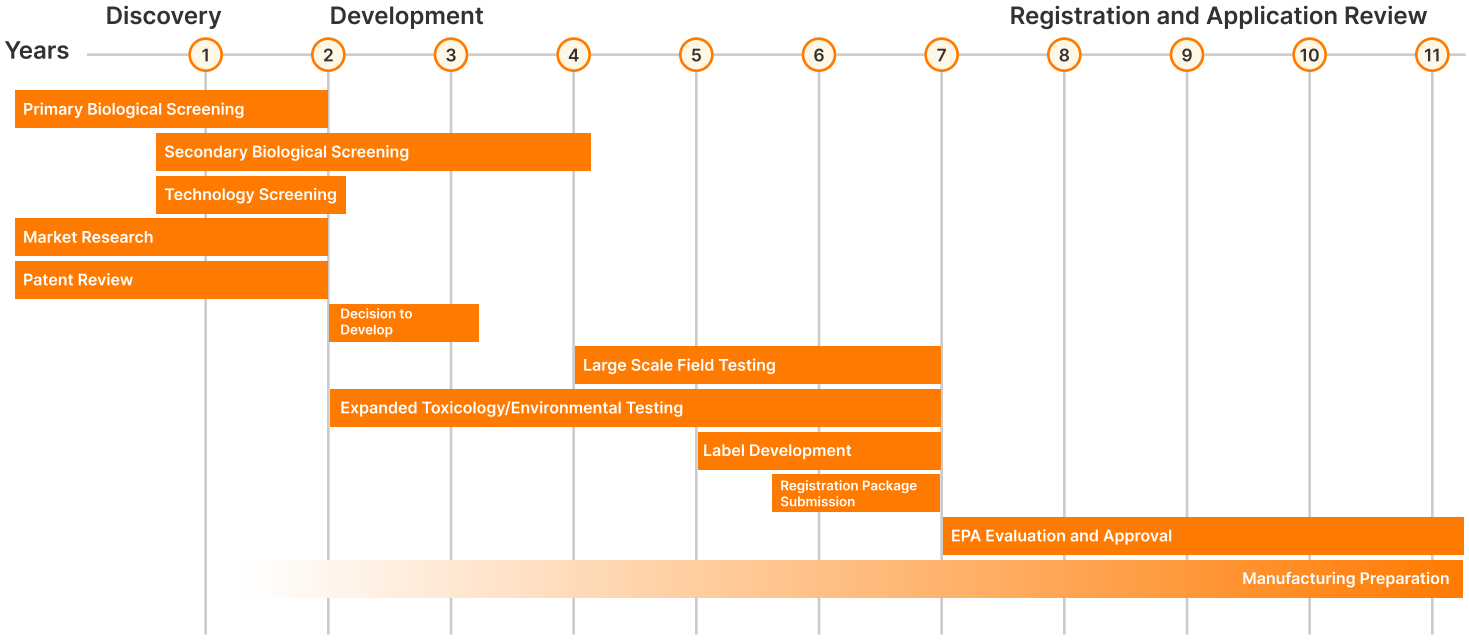
Regulatory requirements also govern key aspects of farming operations, including pesticide use. Strict regulations determine which products reach the market and how they can be safely used.

Following its original enactment in 1947, the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) was fundamentally transformed in the early 1970s, when Congress substantially expanded the federal government's role in pesticide regulation through the Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act of 1972. That overhaul designated the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the primary national regulator of pesticides and established a uniform, science-based system for evaluating and approving pesticide products and their labels.

Congress further strengthened this framework in 1996 with the passage of the Food Quality Protection Act, which modernized FIFRA's safety standards and established a periodic registration review program to ensure that pesticides remain protective of human, animal and environmental health as science evolves.

Together, these legislative actions created the rigorous, world-class regulatory system in place today. Under FIFRA, pesticides must undergo extensive, multi-year scientific evaluation before entering the market and are reevaluated over time to ensure continued compliance with federal safety standards. EPA assesses potential risks to human health, animals, and the environment, and only registers products that meet its robust, science-based criteria. Approved products must carry EPA-approved labels reflecting the agency's scientific findings, which govern how the product may be lawfully used. Manufacturers and users may not deviate from these federally approved labels as the label is the law.[31]

Pesticide Development and Registration Timeline



Source: Crop Life America[32]

FIFRA makes clear that EPA-approved labeling serves as the national standard. The statute expressly prohibits states from imposing labeling requirements that are "in addition to or different from" those approved by EPA. Nonetheless, some states—most notably California—have pursued policies that effectively contradict EPA's scientific determinations, and some courts have improperly applied FIFRA's preemption standard. These actions risk creating a patchwork of inconsistent regulatory requirements, threatening farmers' access to essential tools and undermining the uniform, science-based framework Congress established and entrusted to EPA.

These inconsistent policies are not abstract concerns, they have real-world consequences.

> Glyphosate is one of the main tools in our toolbox on our operation for controlling weeds, and if that was taken away from us, we'd have to look for different products that was probably more expensive to our operation and then that would create higher costs for our product and that might end up going, in the end of the day, higher products for consumers."
>
> — Jon Miller, Ohio Farmer

When asked how these restrictions would impact their operations, farmers report concerns across multiple areas:



Source: 2025 Morning Consult Survey[33]

Without predictable, science-based regulations, farmers risk losing tools fundamental to their operations and essential to keeping yields high, costs manageable, and food prices stable.

> I think it's really important that the conversations happen between the people on the ground and the policymakers. Because I think when you have too many people in between, the conversations can get confused and they can get muddled. So policy I think should be made after having conversations together with the people that are growing the crops, the people that are using the products."
>
> — Austin Poulson, Idaho Farmer

Farmers overwhelmingly want policymakers to engage them directly and when asked who should be most responsible for making decisions that impact agriculture, farmers choose ag experts, citing **the USDA, agricultural organizations and coalitions, and Congress.**[34]

The message is clear: policy decisions must be consistent and informed by the people who grow our food.

Section 04

WHAT CAN POLICYMAKERS DO?



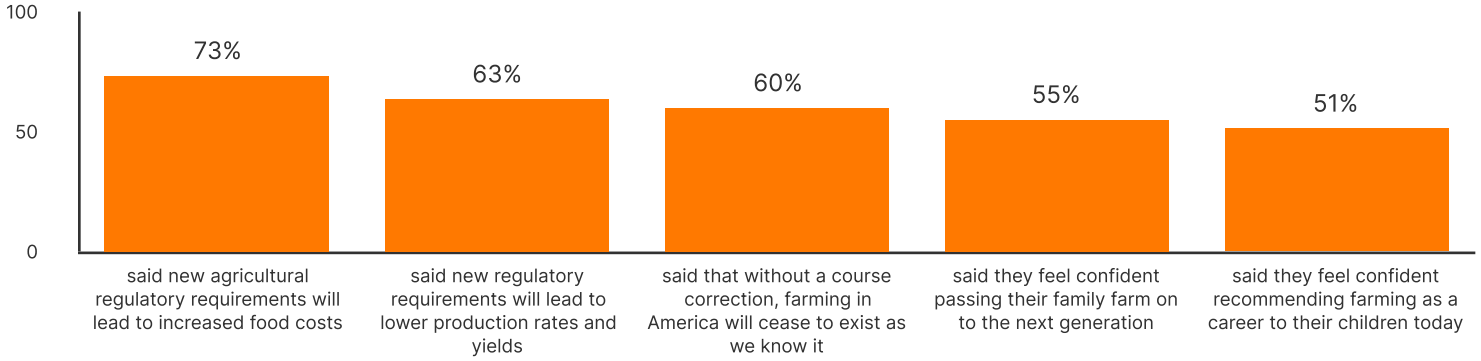
WHAT CAN POLICYMAKERS DO?

The challenges facing American agriculture today are varied and complex, and each requires a tailored policy response. One area squarely within Congress's control is the regulatory framework governing the crop protection tools farmers depend on.

Just as we do not have state regulatory patchworks for aviation safety or FDA-approved medicines, Congress established a clear, science-based system that empowers the EPA to evaluate and approve crop protection products under rigorous safety standards. That framework has provided farmers with certainty, ensuring that products deemed safe and effective remain available nationwide. Today, however, that system is increasingly weakened and bypassed, creating uncertainty for farmers and putting essential tools at risk. **Restoring clarity and consistency to this regulatory framework is a concrete step Congress can take in the next farm bill reauthorization to help secure the future of American farming.**

The erosion of this regulatory framework is not an abstract policy concern—it is being felt directly by growers on the ground. **Farmers' views on regulation and the future of farming reflect these concerns, particularly around costs, production, and long-term viability.**

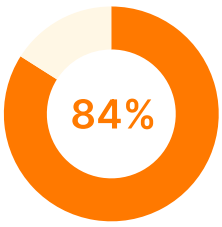
Sentiments On The Future Of Farming



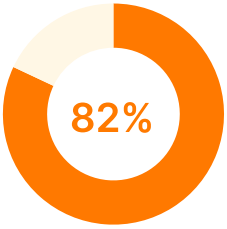
Source: 2025 Morning Consult Survey[35]

Taken together, these responses point to a broader erosion of confidence in the future of farming and a growing concern that the industry is approaching a breaking point. To help farmers in these challenging times, one concrete area policymakers can address is the need for a stable, predictable policy environment that prioritizes science-based decision-making, regulatory clarity, and economic viability.

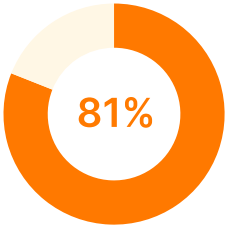
Against this backdrop of uncertainty, farmers consistently point to crop protection tools as essential to keeping their operations viable. With respect to the use of crop protection products, **farmers rank the following as very or somewhat important:**



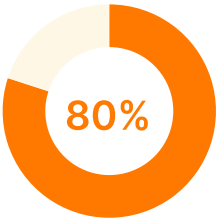
Say making farming less expensive by utilizing safe crop protection products.



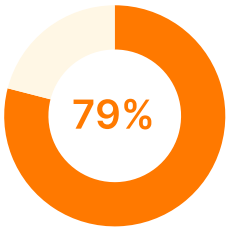
Say having the freedom to use the proven tools necessary to grow food and keep prices low.



Say enabling efficient land and water use.



Say ensuring crops aren't lost to weed and pest infestations.



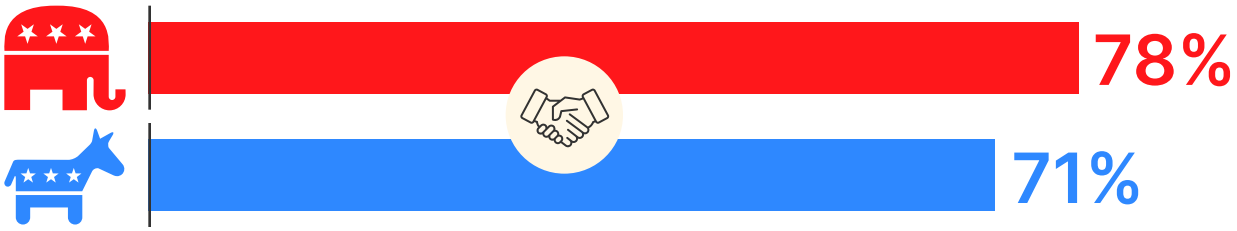
Say protecting against widespread crop loss.

Notably, more than two-thirds of farmers say it is important to retain access to glyphosate-based crop protection tools that regulators have deemed safe for decades.

Source: 2025 Morning Consult Survey[36]

Farmers understand that the economic consequences of losing access to these tools are substantial. Research shows that without access to pest management tools, farmers could face yield losses of **up to 50.3%** in corn acres and **52.1%** in soybean acres.[37] According to a report by the Directions Group, the loss of farmers' access to just glyphosate would cost as much as **$2.89 billion in annual farm revenue**, a bill that farmers cannot afford in today's environment.[38]

This concern is not limited to farmers. Supporting farmers and their crop protection tools has wide bipartisan support, with a majority of both Republican and Democrat voters saying they are more likely to support leaders who stand with farmers over activist trial lawyers attempting to take away critical agricultural innovations.



78% of Republicans and 71% of Democrats are more likely to support leaders who stand with farmers over trial lawyers.

Source: Modern Ag Alliance 2025 Ag Insights Survey[39]

> Policymakers and legislators can support farmers by trusting science-backed solutions and facts that prove the safety of the products we're using and the practices that we're implementing. If you look at where we have come as an industry in farming, the introduction of glyphosate-based herbicides and other innovations have brought us to a whole new age. Whether it be going from a moldboard plow to, now, having to only go across the field less than seven or eight times, reducing compaction, managing erosion, and providing more clean, safe solutions of growing crops, it's amazing. **If you look to the future though, we are under pressure of losing these innovations due to over-burdensome regulation. A changing society that doesn't trust science and facts, and, ultimately, the message that farmers have for them is, we have children, too.** We have employees and business partners that we work alongside each and every day, we want them to have clean, safe, affordable food. And glyphosate has been a tool that's allowed us to do it, and future innovation will only allow it to get better."
>
> — Scott Henry, Iowa Farmer

America's agricultural future depends on policymakers engaging directly with farmers to better understand the need for crop protection tools and provide the long-term certainty they need to plan, invest, and succeed.



Conclusion

The Modern Ag Alliance sought to understand the state of the American farmer by grounding its analysis in historical context, examining current conditions, and evaluating what lies ahead. What we found is sobering.

For many growers, conditions are increasingly complex, and in some cases, unsustainable. Technologies that once revolutionized agriculture are under threat due to a shifting regulatory landscape, while declining commodity prices and global headwinds further exacerbate uncertainty.

The first step in strengthening the future of American farming is ensuring that policymakers are listening to the farmers on the ground who know their business best. Farmers deserve certainty, not confusion and politics, when it comes to the policies that make or break their ability to produce a safe, reliable supply of food, fuels, and fibers. And stakeholders across the spectrum, from producers, industry partners, elected leaders, and everyday Americans feeling the weight of the affordability crisis, have a role to play in advocating for that certainty.

Innovation, modern tools, and science-based regulation form the backbone of a productive and resilient agricultural system. While the war on food continues, safeguarding this foundation is not merely a policy preference; it is a commitment to the people who feed and fuel this country and to the rural communities that define so much of who we are as a nation.

Addressing the growing farm crisis will require thoughtful legislative solutions, that responds to the affordability challenges and provides regulatory certainty for the tools farmers rely on. As this conversation continues, the Modern Ag Alliance remains steadfast in its mission to educate and advocate for farmers' access to science-based crop protection tools that help keep American agriculture strong.



REFERENCES

1. Feeding the Economy. (2025, March 13). https://feedingtheeconomy.com/
2. U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, April 26). Historical Population Change Data (1910-2020). Census.gov. https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/popchange-data-text.html
3. Farm Population Lowest Since 1850's. (1988, July 20). https://www.nytimes.com/1988/07/20/us/farm-population-lowest-since-1850-s.html

   Fast facts about Agriculture & Food. American Farm Bureau Federation. (n.d.). https://www.fb.org/newsroom/fast-facts
4. U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, April 26). Historical Population Change Data (1910-2020). Census.gov. http://census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/popchange-data-text.html

   Farm Population Lowest Since 1850's. (1988, July 20). https://www.nytimes.com/1988/07/20/us/farm-population-lowest-since-1850-s.html

   Fast facts about Agriculture & Food. American Farm Bureau Federation. (n.d.). https://www.fb.org/newsroom/fast-facts

   Banks, V. J., Beale, C. L., & Bowles, G. K. (1963). Farm Population Estimates for 1910-62.

   Banks, V. J., & Beale, C. L. (1973). Farm population estimates, 1910-70 (No. 523). Rural Development Service.

   Gibson, C. (2010). American demographic history chartbook: 1790 to 2010. Washington, DC (web).
5. Economic Research Center/USDA. (n.d.). Seed Industry Structure Is Characterized by Growth and Consolidation. The Seed Industry in U.S. Agriculture. https://ers.usda.gov/sites/default/files/_laserfiche/publications/42517/13605_aib786g_1_.pdf?v=77181

   Horses lose their jobs. Wessels Living History Farm. (2023, January 19). https://livinghistoryfarm.org/farming-in-the-1940s/machines/horses-lose-their-jobs/

   Public Broadcasting Service. (2025, April). The Green Revolution: Norman Borlaug and the race to fight global hunger. PBS. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/green-revolution-norman-borlaug-race-to-fight-global-hunger/

   Glyphosate Safety Regulatory timeline. Modern Ag Alliance. (2025, June 4). https://modernagalliance.org/glyphosate-safety-regulatory-timeline/

   The Evolution of Precision Agriculture and Policy Implications. American Farm Bureau Federation. (n.d). https://www.fb.org/market-intel/the-evolution-of-precision-agriculture-and-policy-implications

   "Dimensions of Precision Agriculture." National Research Council. (1997). Precision Agriculture in the 21st Century: Geospatial and Information Technologies in Crop Management. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: 10.17226/5491

   Boehlje, M. (2023, January 27). Value of Data/Information & The Payoff of Precision Farming . Purdue University Center for Commercial Agriculture. https://ag.purdue.edu/commercialag/home/resource/2021/02/the-value-of-data-information-and-the-payoff-of-precision-farming/
6. RECORD IN FARM EXPORTS.; Volume for 1921 Exceeded 1920 Total--Money Value Less. The New York Times. (1922). https://www.nytimes.com/1922/02/18/archives/our-trade-balance-gains-four-fold-increase-shown-in-1921-over-last.html

   Agricultural Products. United States International Trade Commission. (2021b). https://www.usitc.gov/research_and_analysis/tradeshifts/2021/agriculture
7. DeBlois, E. N., & DeBlois, E. N. (1971). Larger Commercial Shipments Boost U.S. Farm Product Exports in Calendar Year 1970. Unknown. https://doi.org/10.22004/AG.ECON.317869
8. Picchi, A., & Cunningham, M. (2025, November 19). America's deepening affordability crisis summed up in 5 charts. CBS News. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/affordability-2025-inflation-food-prices-housing-child-care-health-costs/
9. Edelberg, W., Haskins, G., Steinmetz-Silber, N., & Hadden Loh, T. (2025, December 2). In every corner of the country, the middle class struggles with affordability. Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/in-every-corner-of-the-country-the-middle-class-struggles-with-affordability/
10. Dumay, C. (2025, November 24). 'you can't just talk about gas and groceries': GOP grapples with housing affordability message. POLITICO. https://www.politico.com/news/2025/11/24/republicans-housing-affordability-message-rent-mortgage-00665189
11. Horsley, S. (2025, September 19). Grocery prices have jumped up, and there's no relief in sight. NPR. https://www.npr.org/2025/09/19/nx-s1-5539547/grocery-prices-tariffs-food-inflation

12. Aimpoint Research. (2023, July). Farm Bill Programs & the Role of Crop Protection Tools. Retrieved from https://report-directionsgroup.com/
13. Morgan, T. (2025, November 19). AG lenders anticipate only half of U.S. farm borrowers to turn a profit in 2025. Ag Web. https://www.agweb.com/news/ag-lenders-anticipate-only-half-u-s-farm-borrowers-turn-profit-2025
14. Ibid.
15. Eller, D. (2025, November 20). With falling profits, Iowa farmers facing "extreme financial distress," more bankruptcies. The Des Moines Register. https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/money/agriculture/2025/11/20/iowa-farm-bankruptcies-financial-distress/86951743007/?gnt-cfr=1&gca-cat=p&gca-uir=false&gca-epti=undefined&gca-ft=0&gca-ds=sophi&gnt-djm=
16. Vega, C., Chasan, A., Rey, M., & Woods, J. (2025, November 9). Generations work on family farms. with costs high and prices low, farmers worry they may lose it all. CBS News. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-farms-financial-challenges-60-minutes/
17. Parum, F. (2025, October 6). Declining farm economy continues to pressure profitability. American Farm Bureau Federation. https://www.fb.org/market-intel/declining-farm-economy-continues-to-pressure-profitability
18. Ibid.
19. Short-run effects of 2025 tariffs so far. The Budget Lab at Yale. (2025, September 2). https://budgetlab.yale.edu/research/short-run-effects-2025-tariffs-so-far
20. Q: Which of the following issues impacting American Farmers have you experienced (firsthand)? from 2025 Morning Consult survey
21. Q: And which of these issues do you believe are having the greatest negative impact on the agriculture industry? Please select your top 3. from 2025 Morning Consult survey
22. Ibid.
23. Parum, F. (2025, October 6). Declining farm economy continues to pressure profitability. American Farm Bureau Federation. https://www.fb.org/market-intel/declining-farm-economy-continues-to-pressure-profitability
24. Parum, F. (2025, September 11). Fertilizer Outlook: Global Risks, higher costs, tighter margins. American Farm Bureau Federation. https://www.fb.org/market-intel/fertilizer-outlook-global-risks-higher-costs-tighter-margins
25. Q: Which of the following issues impacting American Farmers have you experienced (firsthand)? from 2025 Morning Consult survey
26. Q: And which of these issues do you believe are having the greatest negative impact on the agriculture industry? Please select your top 3. from 2025 Morning Consult survey
27. Parum, F. (2025, October 6). Declining farm economy continues to pressure profitability. American Farm Bureau Federation. https://www.fb.org/market-intel/declining-farm-economy-continues-to-pressure-profitability
28. Vassallo, J. (2025, October 28). US farmers face $44 billion in losses as costs rise and markets shrink. Investigate Midwest. https://investigatemidwest.org/2025/10/28/us-farmers-face-44-billion-in-losses-as-costs-rise-and-markets-shrink/
29. Family-owned farms account for 95% of U.S. farms, according to the Census of Agriculture Typology Report. United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2025, August). https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/2025/08-19-2025.php
30. Q: What types of government support and/or policy changes do you believe would be the most beneficial to US farmers? Please select your top three; Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? --- Farmers should be consulted on the operational impacts of new regulations. from 2025 Morning Consult survey
31. Environmental Protection Agency. (n.d.). Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and Federal Facilities. EPA. https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/federal-insecticide-fungicide-and-rodenticide-act-fifra-and-federal-facilities
32. Lab to Field. CropLife America. (n.d.). https://www.croplifeamerica.org/lab-to-field
33. Q: In what ways have/do you expect recent crop protection restrictions to impact you and your business? Please select all that apply. from 2025 Morning Consult survey
34. Q: And who do you believe should be most responsible for making decisions that impact the agriculture industry? from 2025 Morning Consult Survey

35. Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? --- New agriculture regulatory requirements will lead to increased food costs; New agriculture regulatory requirements will lead to lower production rates and yields; Without course correction, farming in America will cease to exist as we know it; I feel confident in passing my family farm on to the next generation; I feel confident in recommending farming as a career to my kids today. from 2025 Morning Consult survey.
36. Q: How important are the following for you and your farm? --- Making farming less expensive by utilizing safe crop protection products; Having the freedom to use the proven tools necessary to grow food and keep prices low, including using safe crop protection products; Ensuring crops aren't lost to weed and pest infestations through use of safe crop protection products; Enabling efficient land and water use through use of safe crop protection products; Protecting against wide-spread crop loss through use of safe crop protection products; Having the right to use glyphosate-based crop protection products that have been deemed safe to use as directed by U.S. and global health regulators for over 50 years. from 2025 Morning Consult survey.
37. Soltani, N., Dille, J. A., Burke, I. C., Everman, W. J., VanGessel, M. J., Davis, V. M., & Sikkema, P. H. (2017). Potential yield loss in corn, soybean, dry bean and sugar beet due to weed interference in North America. Weed Science Society of America. https://wssa.net/wp-content/uploads/Corn-soybean-drybean-and-sugarbeet.pdf
38. Aimpoint Research. (2025, January 28). A Future Without Glyphosate and Its Farm Bill Implications. Retrieved from https://report-directionsgroup.com/
39. AMERICANS SUPPORT FARMERS' ACCESS TO CROP PROTECTION TOOLS. Modern Ag Alliance. (2025, March 3). https://modernagalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/MAA_Survey_National_2025.pdf


MODERN AG
ALLIANCE