

106TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4018

To amend the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 to establish an educational program to improve the risk management skills of agricultural producers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 16, 2000

Mr. NETHERCUTT (for himself and Mr. LATHAM) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 to establish an educational program to improve the risk management skills of agricultural producers.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. IMPROVED RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION.**

4 Title IV of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and
5 Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7621 et seq.)
6 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

1 **“SEC. 409. IMPROVED RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FOR**
2 **AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS.**

3 “(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agri-
4 culture shall carry out a program to improve the risk man-
5 agement skills of agricultural producers, including the
6 owners and operators of small farms, limited resource pro-
7 ducers, and other targeted audiences, to make informed
8 risk management decisions. The program is designed to
9 assist producers to develop the skills necessary—

10 “(1) to understand the financial health and ca-
11 pability of the producer’s operation to withstand
12 price fluctuations, adverse weather, environmental
13 impacts, diseases, family crises, and other risks;

14 “(2) to understand marketing alternatives, how
15 various commodity markets work, the use of crop in-
16 surance products, and the price risk inherent in var-
17 ious markets; and

18 “(3) to understand legal, governmental, envi-
19 ronmental, and human resource issues that impact
20 the producer’s operation.

21 “(b) COORDINATING CENTERS.—

22 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—The
23 Secretary shall establish a Risk Management Edu-
24 cation Coordinating Center in each of five regions of
25 the United States to administer and coordinate the

1 provision of risk management education to producers
2 and their families under the program in that region.

3 “(2) SITE SELECTION.—The Secretary shall lo-
4 cate the Center for a region at an existing risk man-
5 agement education coordinating office of the Cooper-
6 ative State Research, Education, and Extension
7 Service or at an appropriate alternative land-grant
8 college in the region approved by the Cooperative
9 State Research, Education, and Extension Service.
10 To be selected as the location for a Center, a land-
11 grant college must have the demonstrated capability
12 and capacity to carry out the program priorities,
13 funding distribution, and reporting requirements of
14 the program.

15 “(c) COORDINATING COUNCIL.—Each Center shall
16 establish a coordinating council to assist in establishing
17 the funding and program priorities for that region. The
18 council shall consist of a minimum of five members, in-
19 cluding representatives from the following sources:

20 “(1) Public organizations.

21 “(2) Private organizations.

22 “(3) Agricultural producers.

23 “(4) The Regional Service Offices of the Risk
24 Management Agency in that region.

25 “(d) CENTER ACTIVITIES.—

1 “(1) INSTRUCTION FOR RISK MANAGEMENT
2 PROFESSIONALS.—Each Center shall coordinate the
3 offering of intensive risk management instructional
4 programs, involving classroom, distant learning, and
5 field training work, for professionals who work with
6 agricultural producers. These professionals include—

7 “(A) extension specialists;

8 “(B) county extension faculty;

9 “(C) private service providers; and

10 “(D) other individuals who are involved in
11 providing risk management education.

12 “(2) EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR PRO-
13 DUCERS.—Each Center shall coordinate the provi-
14 sion of educational programs, including workshops,
15 short courses, seminars, and distant-learning mod-
16 ules, to improve the risk management skills of agri-
17 cultural producers and their families.

18 “(3) DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF
19 MATERIALS.—Each Center shall coordinate the ef-
20 forts to develop new risk management education ma-
21 terials and the dissemination of such materials.

22 “(4) COORDINATION OF RESOURCES.—Each
23 Center shall make use of available and emerging risk
24 management information, materials, and delivery
25 systems, after careful evaluation of the content and

1 suitability of the information, materials, and delivery
2 systems for producers and their families. The Cen-
3 ters shall use available expertise from land-grant col-
4 leges, nongovernmental organizations, government
5 agencies, and the private sector to assist in con-
6 ducting this evaluation.

7 “(e) GRANTS.—

8 “(1) SPECIAL GRANTS.—Each Center shall re-
9 serve a portion of the funds provided under this sec-
10 tion to make special grants to land-grant colleges
11 and private entities in the region to conduct one or
12 more of the activities described in subsection (d).

13 “(2) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—Each Center shall
14 also reserve a portion of the funds provided under
15 this section to conduct a competitive grant program
16 to award grants to both public and private entities
17 that have a demonstrated capability to conduct one
18 or more of the activities described in subsection (d).

19 “(f) NATIONAL AGRICULTURE RISK EDUCATION LI-
20 BRARY.—The National Agriculture Risk Education Li-
21 brary is a central focus for the coordination and distribu-
22 tion of risk management educational materials. The Li-
23 brary shall serve as a means for the electronic delivery
24 of risk management information and materials.

25 “(g) FUNDING PROVISIONS.—

1 “(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

2 There is authorized to be appropriated \$30,000,000
3 for fiscal year 2001 and each subsequent fiscal year
4 to carry out this section.

5 “(2) DISTRIBUTION.—Funds appropriated to
6 carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be equal-
7 ly distributed among the Centers, except that 2.5
8 percent of such funds shall be distributed to the Na-
9 tional Agriculture Risk Education Library. The
10 land-grant college at which a Center is located shall
11 be responsible for administering and disbursing such
12 funds, in accordance with applicable State and Fed-
13 eral financial guidelines, for activities authorized by
14 this section.

15 “(3) PROHIBITION ON CONSTRUCTION.—Cen-
16 ters shall be located in existing facilities. Funds pro-
17 vided under this section to a Center or as a grant
18 under subsection (e) may not be used to carry out
19 facility construction.

20 “(h) EVALUATION.—The Secretary, acting through
21 the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension
22 Service, shall evaluate the activities of the Centers to de-
23 termine whether the risk management skills of agricul-
24 tural producers and their families are improved as a result
25 of their participation in educational activities financed

1 using funds appropriated pursuant to the authorization of
2 appropriations in subsection (g).

3 “(i) LAND-GRANT COLLEGE DEFINED.—In this sec-
4 tion, the term ‘land-grant college’ means any 1862 Institu-
5 tion, 1890 Institution, or 1994 Institution.”.

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