

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5875

To provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2029, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 31, 2025

Mr. COSTA (for himself, Mr. VALADAO, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. GRAY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2029, and for other purposes.

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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Converting Our Waste
5 Sustainably Act of 2025” or the “COWS Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) the Alternative Manure Management Pro-
9 gram (AMMP) is a successful program in California

1 that supports the livestock industry and is an exam-
 2 ple of what can be done nationally in the United
 3 States through a variety of practices on responsible
 4 manure management;

5 (2) the 195 existing projects under AMMP are
 6 contributing towards the reduction of 1,600,000
 7 metric tons of greenhouse gases; and

8 (3) these practices enhance sustainability and
 9 nurture continued environmental stewardship, ulti-
 10 mately leading to enhanced local air quality and re-
 11 cycled manure for use as a natural fertilizer or com-
 12 post for healthier soil.

13 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

14 (a) COMPOSTING PRACTICE.—Section 1201(a) of the
 15 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801(a)) is amend-
 16 ed—

17 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through
 18 (27) as paragraphs (4) through (28), respectively;
 19 and

20 (2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-
 21 lowing:

22 “(3) COMPOSTING PRACTICE.—The term
 23 ‘composting practice’ means an activity (including
 24 an activity that does not require the use of a

1 composting facility) to produce compost from or-
2 ganic waste that is—

3 “(A) generated on a farm; or

4 “(B) brought to a farm from the nearby
5 community; and

6 “(C) the use and active management of
7 compost on a farm to improve water retention
8 and soil health, subject to the condition that
9 such use shall be in compliance with applicable
10 Federal, State, and local laws.”.

11 (b) ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT.—Section
12 1240A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
13 3839aa–1) is amended—

14 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through
15 (10) as paragraphs (2) through (11), respectively;
16 and

17 (2) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so re-
18 designated, the following:

19 “(1) ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT
20 PRACTICES.—The term ‘alternative manure manage-
21 ment practices’ means management measures that
22 reduce baseline methane and nitrous oxide emissions
23 and, where applicable, reduce nitrate leaching into
24 groundwater or improve carbon sequestration, in-
25 cluding—

1 “(A) converting to or improving pasture-
2 based management, including management-in-
3 tensive rotational grazing (as defined in section
4 1240L(d)(1));

5 “(B) compost-bedded pack barns that com-
6 post manure, slatted floor pit storage that is
7 cleaned out at least once a month, or other
8 similar practices as determined by the Sec-
9 retary; and

10 “(C) solid separation, scrape and vacuum
11 technologies, or other measures, including ma-
12 nure management system retrofits, that pri-
13 marily avoid wet handling and storage infra-
14 structure in conjunction with—

15 “(i) open or enclosed solar drying;

16 “(ii) composting;

17 “(iii) vermiculture or vermifiltration;

18 “(iv) forced evaporation;

19 “(v) solid storage; or

20 “(vi) other similar methods as deter-
21 mined by the Secretary.”.

22 (c) PRACTICE.—Subparagraph (A) of section
23 1240A(7) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
24 3839aa–1(7)), as so redesignated by subsection (a), is
25 amended—

1 (1) in clause (ii), by inserting “and composting
2 practices” after “practices”;

3 (2) in clause (vi), by striking the “and” at the
4 end;

5 (3) by redesignating clause (vii) as clause (ix);
6 and

7 (4) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

8 “(vii) composting practices;

9 “(viii) alternative manure manage-
10 ment practices; and”.

11 (d) INCLUSIONS.—Section 1240I(2)(B)(i) of the
12 Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–
13 21(2)(B)(i)) is amended by inserting “and composting
14 practices” after “drainage management systems”.

15 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.**

16 (a) INCREASED PAYMENTS FOR HIGH-PRIORITY
17 PRACTICES.—Section 1240B(d)(7) of the Food Security
18 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(d)(7)) is amended—

19 (1) in the paragraph heading, by inserting
20 “STATE-DETERMINED” before “HIGH-PRIORITY”;
21 and

22 (2) in subparagraph (A)—

23 (A) in clause (iii), by striking “or” at the
24 end;

1 (B) in clause (iv), by striking the period at
 2 the end and inserting “; or”; and

3 (C) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(v) increases carbon sequestration or
 5 reduces greenhouse gas emissions, includ-
 6 ing emissions of methane and nitrous
 7 oxide.”.

8 (b) LIVESTOCK.—Section 1240B(f)(1) of the Food
 9 Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(f)(1)) is
 10 amended by inserting “and alternative manure manage-
 11 ment” after “including grazing management”.

12 (c) ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT PRAC-
 13 TICES.—Section 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985
 14 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2) is amended—

15 (1) by redesignating subsections (h) through (j)
 16 as subsection (i) through (k), respectively; and

17 (2) by inserting after subsection (g) the fol-
 18 lowing:

19 “(h) ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT PRAC-
 20 TICES.—

21 “(1) PAYMENT AMOUNTS.—The Secretary may
 22 provide a payment for an alternative manure man-
 23 agement practice for an amount that is up to 100
 24 percent of the costs associated with planning, design,
 25 materials, equipment, installation, labor, manage-

1 ment, maintenance, and training related to imple-
2 menting a covered management measure.

3 “(2) **ADVANCED PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary
4 shall provide at least 50 percent of the amount of
5 total payments for an alternative manure manage-
6 ment practice in advance for all costs related to—

7 “(A) purchasing or contracting materials
8 and equipment; or

9 “(B) any technical assistance provided by
10 the Secretary.

11 “(3) **TERM.**—A contract awarded under this
12 section shall have a term that does not exceed 3
13 years.”.

14 **SEC. 5. PRIORITIZATION OF APPLICATIONS.**

15 Section 1240C(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985
16 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–3(b)) is amended—

17 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through
18 (4) as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively,
19 and by indenting such subparagraphs 2 ems to the
20 right;

21 (2) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
22 as redesignated by paragraph (1), by striking “In
23 evaluating applications under this subchapter, the
24 Secretary shall prioritize applications—” and insert-
25 ing the following:

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In evaluating applications
2 under this subchapter, the Secretary shall prioritize
3 applications—”; and

4 (3) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(2) ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT AP-
6 PPLICATIONS.—

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
8 develop criteria for evaluating and ranking al-
9 ternative manure management contract offers
10 to prioritize applications that will maximize—

11 “(i) carbon sequestration;

12 “(ii) greenhouse gas emissions reduc-
13 tions; and

14 “(iii) the overall environmental and
15 public health benefits, including improved
16 water quality and quantity.

17 “(B) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA.—In awarding
18 alternative manure management applications,
19 the Secretary shall develop criteria to ensure—

20 “(i) geographical diversity;

21 “(ii) scale diversity, including support
22 for small and medium sized dairy and live-
23 stock operations; and

24 “(iii) participation by operations with
25 a demonstrated track record of adopting

1 conservation measures and reducing green-
2 house gas emissions.

3 “(C) CLUSTER APPLICATIONS.—The Sec-
4 retary shall establish procedures under which—

5 “(i) a group of producers may submit
6 a joint application for a shared composting
7 facility; and

8 “(ii) the Secretary allocates payments
9 to each eligible producer associated with
10 that joint contract.

11 “(D) SERVING CERTAIN PRODUCERS.—To
12 the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary
13 shall award the majority of alternative manure
14 contracts finalized each fiscal year to offers
15 from small and mid-sized dairy and livestock
16 operations, including—

17 “(i) beginning farmers or ranchers;

18 “(ii) limited resource farmers and
19 ranchers; and

20 “(iii) socially disadvantaged farmers
21 and ranchers.”.

22 **SEC. 6. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**

23 Section 1240F of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
24 U.S.C. 3839aa–6) is amended by—

1 (1) inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—” before “To
2 the extent appropriate, the Secretary shall assist a
3 producer in achieving the conservation and environ-
4 mental goals of a program plan by—”; and

5 (2) inserting at the end the following:

6 “(b) ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT.—For
7 alternative manure management contracts, the Secretary
8 shall—

9 “(1) determine and publish factors for esti-
10 mating the carbon sequestrations and greenhouse
11 gas emissions reductions for each alternative manure
12 management practice;

13 “(2) identify eligible producers based on ma-
14 nure management practices used at the time of ap-
15 plication, including the anaerobic decomposition of
16 volatile solids stored in a lagoon or other predomi-
17 nantly liquid anaerobic environment and their ability
18 to replace or complement that anaerobic system with
19 an alternative manure management practice; and

20 “(3) assist an eligible producer in achieving the
21 carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas emissions re-
22 duction, and other environmental and public health
23 goals of the alternative manure management systems
24 by—

1 “(A) providing payments for designing and
2 implementing one or more alternative manure
3 management practices;

4 “(B) providing that eligible producer with
5 information, technical assistance, and training
6 to aid in implementation of the alternative ma-
7 nure management practices;

8 “(C) reviewing the adequacy of existing
9 conservation practice standards for supporting
10 the alternative manure management practices
11 and, if necessary—

12 “(i) revising existing conservation
13 practice standards; and

14 “(ii) developing new conservation
15 practice standards; and

16 “(D) entering into cooperative agreements
17 with third-party technical assistance providers
18 with relevant expertise in alternative manure
19 management systems to ensure adequate tech-
20 nical services are available to alternative ma-
21 nure management applicants.”.

22 **SEC. 7. LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS.**

23 Section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16
24 U.S.C. 3839aa–7) is amended—

1 (1) by inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—” before
2 “Not including payments”; and

3 (2) by striking “, regardless of the number of
4 contracts entered into under this subchapter by the
5 person or legal entity” and inserting at the end the
6 following:

7 “(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY AND LIMITATION.—The
8 Secretary may—

9 “(1) waive the applicability of the limitations in
10 section 1001D(b) or section 1240(G) for a payment
11 made under an alternative manure management con-
12 tract if the Secretary determines that the waiver is
13 necessary to fulfill the objectives of the project; and

14 “(2) impose a separate payment limitation for
15 the contract with respect to which the waiver ap-
16 plies.”.

17 **SEC. 8. NEW OR INNOVATIVE CONSERVATION APPROACH.**

18 Section 1240H(c)(1)(B)(i) of the Food Security Act
19 of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–8(c)(1)(B)(i)) is amended—

20 (1) in subclause (VI), by striking “and” at the
21 end; and

22 (2) by inserting at the end the following:

23 “(VIII) alternative manure man-
24 agement practices; and”.

1 **SEC. 9. DELIVERY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**

2 Section 1242(h) of the Food Security Act of 1985
3 (16 U.S.C. 3842(h)) is amended by adding at the end the
4 following:

5 “(5) DEVELOPMENT OF COMPOSTING PRACTICE
6 STANDARD.—Not later than one year after the date
7 of enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary
8 shall—

9 “(A) conduct a review of the composting
10 facilities practice standard and the soil carbon
11 amendment practice standard to determine
12 their adequacy in advancing alternative manure
13 management and on-farm composting genera-
14 tion and utilization; and

15 “(B) develop and implement a new con-
16 servation practice standard for the on-farm pro-
17 duction of compost.”.

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