



Fairness for Small-Scale Farmers & Ranchers Act of 2026

Led in the Senate by: Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Cory Booker (D-N.J.); Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.); Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.)

Background:

An increasing lack of competition in America's agricultural industry has opened the door to rapid corporate consolidation, leading to higher costs for consumers and lower pay for farmers. Consolidated entities are incentivized to engage in unfair and discriminatory acts that cause small family farmers to receive less than a competitive price for their goods, leading to a decline in family farms and the hollowing out of rural America. Meanwhile, consolidated retailers leverage their market power to inflate the prices of groceries for consumers.

As a result, concentration in America's food and agricultural economy has reached [unprecedented levels](#), placing power in the hands of large corporations rather than family farmers, agricultural workers, and consumers. Strengthening America's antitrust policies is vital to restoring competition in the agricultural industry, lowering grocery prices for consumers, and ensuring farmers and ranchers get their fair share.

Legislation: The *Fairness for Small-Scale Farmers & Ranchers Act* would weaken the hold consolidated interests have on the agricultural economy, creating a level playing field for farmers and consumers in the market. Specifically, the legislation would mandate a review past mergers of agri-businesses and halt new ones, strengthen antitrust laws in food and agriculture systems, and provide support for local, small-scale farmers and ranchers.

The bill would place a moratorium on large agribusiness, food and beverage manufacturing, and grocery retail mergers in addition to directing the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to retroactively review past large agribusiness, food and beverage manufacturing, and grocery retail mergers. Crucially, the bill also creates a pilot program at the Food Safety and Inspection Service for increased accessibility to inspection and technical assistance for eligible processing facilities, and instructs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review and report on fragility in America's food system.

Additionally, the bill aims to better protect against unfair, discriminatory, and deceptive practices by amending the *Packers and Stockyards Act (PSA)*, empowering packers to use spot market sales from nonaffiliated producers, conducting investigations of live poultry dealers, and amending PSA text to make it more inclusive and gender-neutral. The bill also directs the Secretary of Agriculture to implement the final rule, Unfair Practices and Undue Preferences, in violation of the *PSA*, and directs courts to award reasonable attorney's fees as part of the costs to plaintiffs. Further, the legislation would fund the Local Agricultural Market Program with \$500 million for 2027, 2028, and 2029, and reauthorize and increase funding for beginning, retiring, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, with mandatory funding of \$100M every year. The bill also invests in supply chain infrastructure grants and loans for small livestock, dairy, and poultry processors.

Supporting Organizations: The *Fairness for Small-Scale Farmers & Ranchers Act* is endorsed by the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (FARFA); Health, Environment, Agriculture, and Labor (HEAL) Food Alliance; National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC); and the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW).