May 7, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
S-221 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell:

The undersigned organizations urge you to bring the Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012, which passed on a strong bipartisan vote of 16-5 by the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry on April 26, to the floor for consideration by the full Senate as quickly as possible.

The stakeholders we represent need to know details of the programs which will be in effect in 2013 as soon as possible. Timely action will also enhance prospects for completing new legislation this year rather than needing to extend current program authorities.

The Senate Committee bill already contributes agriculture’s fair share toward deficit reduction by reducing spending by $23 billion. As Chairwoman Stabenow, D-Mich., said during the committee’s markup, “Farm bills are never easy, and a farm bill like this is especially hard when we’re making serious and needed reforms while also cutting the deficit by $23 billion.” Also, as Ranking Member Roberts, R-Kan., stated, “We’ve performed our duty to taxpayers by cutting deficit spending while at the same time strengthening and preserving the programs so important to agriculture and rural America.”

This is one piece of legislation upon which all Americans depend, urban as well as rural. With limited time remaining before expiration of current program authorities, time is of the essence. While each of our respective organizations will continue to work to accomplish our key priorities, the farm bill must move forward. We urge your leadership in allowing the Senate to consider this legislation as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

25x’25 Alliance
Advanced Biofuels USA
Agriculture Energy Coalition
American Association of Crop Insurers
American Beekeeping Federation
American Biogas Council
American Coalition for Ethanol
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Farmland Trust
American Forest Foundation
American Forests
American Loggers Council
American Malting Barley Association
American Nursery and Landscape Association
American Pistachio Growers
American Public Works Association
American Pulse Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
American Soybean Association
American Sugar Alliance
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
American Wind Energy Association
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Biotechnology Industry Organization
California Association of Winegrape Growers
California Citrus Mutual
California Climate and Agriculture Network
California Grape and Tree Fruit League
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
Center for Rural Affairs
Cherry Marketing Institute, Inc.
Community Food Security Coalition
Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau
CropLife America
Crop Science Society of America
Ducks Unlimited
Ecological Farming Association
Environmental Defense Fund
Environmental and Energy Study Institute
Fair Food Network
Farmer Mac
Farmworkers Association of Florida
The Fertilizer Institute
Food System Economic Partnership
Forest Landowners Association
Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
Georgia Watermelon Association
Growth Energy
Idaho Grower-Shippers Association
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
International Biochar Initiative
Iowa Environmental Council
Izaak Walton League of America
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Land Trust Alliance
League of Rural Voters
Midwest Dairy Coalition
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of Counties
National Association of Federal Veterinarians
National Association of Regional Councils
National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils
National Association of State Conservation Agencies
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Audubon Society
National Barley Growers Association
National Biodiesel Board
National Cooperative Business Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Farmers Organization
National Farmers Union
National Grange
National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Organic Coalition
National Potato Council
National Rural Development Partnership
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
National Sunflower Association
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
National Watermelon Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
National Woodland Owners Association
National Young Farmers’ Coalition
The Nature Conservancy
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
Occidental Arts and Ecology Center
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Organic Farming Research Foundation
Organic Trade Association
Pheasants Forever
Plum Creek
Pollinator Partnership
Produce Marketing Association
Quail Forever
Renewable Fuels Association
Rural Coalition
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
Slow Food USA
Society for Range Management
Soil and Water Conservation Society
Soil Science Society of America
Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
The Trust for Public Land
United Dairymen of Arizona
United Fresh Produce Association
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Cattlemen’s Association
U.S. Dry Bean Council
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
Western Growers
Wild Blueberry Commission
The Wildlife Society
Wine Institute
World Food Program USA