



## Fruit and Vegetable Incentives

### 2024 Farm Bill Messaging for GusNIP

**Topline Message:** There is bipartisan momentum in the upcoming Farm Bill to increase access to healthy food and boost farmers' bottom lines by improving and expanding the successful Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentives Program (GusNIP).

**GusNIP is a proven tool to help low-income people afford to eat more fruits and vegetables:**

- Since its inception as a pilot program in 2008, GusNIP has proven to be a successful public-private partnership that has expanded healthy food options for families and sparked economic opportunities for farmers and communities across the country.
- GusNIP invests in nutrition incentive initiatives, which help Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants make their benefits go further when they buy fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets and grocery stores, so that they can ultimately put more healthy food on the table.
- When a SNAP shopper goes to a grocery store or farmers market that offers nutrition incentives, they receive a dollar-for-dollar match or discount when they buy fruits and vegetables. That means SNAP participants are able to eat more healthy food, and the farmers and retailers are benefitting from more sales.
- GusNIP also includes the Produce Prescription program, which allows healthcare providers to issue produce vouchers to low-income patients and promote healthier diets.
- This innovative program takes a food-as-medicine approach by empowering patients who struggle with diet-related health issues and lack access to the healthy food they need to live a healthier life.
- GusNIP has long been considered a multi-win solution that is benefiting families, improving public health, and generating returns for farmers and economies.
- **GusNIP Helps Families Eat More Healthy Food:**
  - GusNIP helps low-income families bring home more healthy food.
  - Roughly 90% of Americans do not eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables needed to maintain a healthy diet, which is particularly challenging for low-income people, who say their primary barrier to eating healthier is affording healthy food.
  - [A recent analysis](#) shows that people who utilize nutrition incentives eat more fruit and vegetables compared to the average American, while improving their food security.
- **GusNIP Helps Families Lead Healthier Lives:**
  - GusNIP is a transformative force in public health, enabling low-income Americans to access healthier food options that sustain them and improve health outcomes.
  - Produce prescriptions are helping to expand food as medicine, with impacts rivaling prescription therapies for cardiometabolic health and offering new hope for improved diabetes and glucose control.

- **GusNIP Puts More Money in Farmers' Pockets and Boosts Local Economies:**
  - GusNIP generates a powerful ripple effect through local economies, benefiting farmers and businesses alike.
  - The economic impact of GusNIP has been considerable, generating [approximately \\$85 million in 2022](#), a 107% increase from the previous year.
- **GusNIP improves health.**

**Congress can take action to help the program reach its full potential in the 2023 Farm Bill:**

- GusNIP is a cost-effective way to increase access to healthy fruits and vegetables for low-income children, families, and seniors, while also bolstering farmers' bottom lines.
- In order to ensure that nutrition incentives and produce prescriptions are able to reach more families and help more farmers, Congress must take action in the 2023 Farm Bill to improve and expand GusNIP.
- [Over 600 farm, food, and health leaders](#) support changes in the Farm Bill to strengthen GusNIP, including:
  - **A significant investment in GusNIP** to expand the program across more food retailers and equip more low-income people with the purchase power to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables.
  - **The reduction or elimination of the non-government match requirement** to enable more partners to participate.
  - **Creation of a new USDA program to scale incentives statewide** and prioritize grants for fruit and vegetable incentive projects in diverse retail settings.
  - **Improvements to produce prescriptions** that improve scientific rigor and expedite their utilization in clinical and care management workflows.
- Every dollar invested in GusNIP bolsters local food retailers and the agricultural economy while putting healthier food within reach for low-income households.
- Taking these steps in the Farm Bill will help ensure that more farmers markets and grocery stores across the country are able to offer nutrition incentives so that more low-income families can buy more fruits and vegetables.

**There is broad and bipartisan momentum to grow GusNIP as Congress works toward a consensus Farm Bill:**

- GusNIP is the only federal program with dedicated resources to help SNAP families eat healthier through improving access fruits and vegetables, while also benefitting farmers and local economies.
- In addition to more than [600 groups from across the country](#) who support changes to GusNIP, numerous lawmakers from both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol have seen the potential to incorporate commonsense updates in the next Farm Bill that will help nutrition incentives and produce prescriptions benefit more farmers and families.
- As lawmakers come together to negotiate a bipartisan Farm Bill, we urge negotiators to expand and improve GusNIP in order to help farmers and families.

## Updated Q&A

### ***If Asked about the Senate Framework or the House Bill:***

- The Farm Bill proposals out of the House and Senate signal positive progress towards reaching a final bill that will incorporate bipartisan policies to help farmers, families, and communities alike.
- Provisions in both the House bill and Senate framework include an increase in funding, demonstrating the bipartisan agreement that GusNIP should be expanded so that it can reach more families.
- The Senate framework in particular includes many of the provisions that more than 600 farm, food, and health leaders support, such as an increase in the federal match for GusNIP and more than doubling available funding for the program.
- We appreciate Chairwoman Stabenow and Chairman Thompson for making positive progress towards a consensus bipartisan Farm Bill.

### ***If Pressed on the Senate Framework:***

- The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act framework is a positive first step towards reaching a final bipartisan Farm Bill.
- We're pleased to see that it increases the federal match for GusNIP projects to 80%, makes program improvements to produce prescription projects, and more than doubles available funding to \$131 million a year so that more farmers and families can benefit from this important program nationwide.
- We appreciate Chairwoman Stabenow's leadership and look forward to Congress making positive progress towards a consensus bipartisan Farm Bill.

### ***If Pressed on the House Bill:***

- The Farm, Food, and National Security Act is an important step towards reaching a final bipartisan Farm Bill.
- While the bill includes a modest increase for GusNIP, there are important bipartisan provisions we'd like to see incorporated into the final bill that will expand and improve the program so it can reach more families.
- More than 600 farm, food, and health leaders support changes in the Farm Bill to strengthen GusNIP, including a more significant investment in GusNIP, an increase in the federal match, and improvements to produce prescriptions.
- We appreciate Chairman Thompson's leadership to kick off the process and look forward to Congress making positive progress towards a consensus bipartisan Farm Bill.