



# The Farmer to Farmer Education Act

## Background

Farmers are met with numerous challenges on a daily basis that they need to adapt to, including unexpected weather, droughts, and floods. Critical adaptation strategies include adopting new conservation practices as well as finding adequate support when issues occur. Often, farmers discover that the existing programs lack the necessary support and guidance. Although the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers farmers critical technical assistance, this support can have significant wait times and the informational resources available online or through consultants and service providers are often too general and do not reflect the unique circumstances of an individual farm or farmer. NRCS could use additional support in providing farmers with the help they truly need and deserve.

Farmer-to-farmer education provides a way to overcome many adoption barriers by having someone with firsthand experience share both the benefits and challenges of practice adoption quickly and by addressing the perceived risks to yield, labor costs, and product quality that can prevent farmers from trying a new practice.

## Farmer to Farmer Education Act

To address these issues, this bill would leverage existing technical assistance resources by supporting farmer-led education networks and building capacity for new ones—particularly for communities that are historically marginalized from existing systems—as a key strategy to increase adoption of conservation practices. The bill would authorize NRCS to enter into cooperative agreements with community-based organizations in each state that are able to identify and build on established and burgeoning peer-to-peer networks, and/or create new ones. These organizations would be chosen for their ability to provide culturally relevant assistance to support producers of different cropping systems and approaches, including cooperative agreements that provide outreach to farmers and ranchers from marginalized communities such as beginning, veteran, women, and other historically underserved farmers and ranchers.

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*For more information or to cosponsor, please contact Jared Henderson at [Jared\\_Henderson@lujan.senate.gov](mailto:Jared_Henderson@lujan.senate.gov)*