

## Appropriations Update: House Appropriations Committee Advances FY 2026 Agriculture Bill

*Lewis-Burke Associates LLC – June 12, 2025*

On June 10, the House Appropriations Committee released its fiscal year (FY) 2026 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. The bill's topline discretionary allocation is \$25.523 billion, \$1.163 billion (4.2%) below FY 2025. The full Committee has delayed the vote, but the bill is expected to be advanced. At this time, there is not a clear timeline on if or when the bill will go to the House floor. The Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to consider its version of the bill this summer.

### National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

Per the report accompanying the House Agriculture appropriations bill, **NIFA** would receive \$1.654 billion, a decrease of \$24.6 million below the FY 2025 enacted level and in stark contrast to the proposed \$642 million reduction in the NIFA budget request. Funding for **capacity programs** is flat. Modest increases are provided to several programs, including several of the 1994 programs and the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment and Veterinary Services Grant programs. The **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)** would receive \$445 million, essentially flat with FY 2025. Program reductions include the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program (down \$8 million) and Methyl Bromide Transitions (down \$1 million). Notably, the Research Facilities Act (RFA) would receive \$1 million, level with FY 2025, and the first time the House included RFA in its mark.

The Committee provides no funding for the following NIFA programs:

- New Technologies for Ag Extension
- Rural Health and Safety Initiative
- Food and Ag Service Learning
- Continuing Animal H&D Program
- Research Equipment
- Global Change UV Monitoring

The House bill once again allows the matching requirement for the **Specialty Crop Research Initiative** to be waived by the Secretary of Agriculture. Report language encouraging NIFA to continue supporting the work of the Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes funded through USDA is included. Additional directions are given for Agricultural Research Enhancement Awards, citrus disease research, the Farm and Stress Assistance Network program, and numerous other programs.

The House report prioritizes plant and animal health, emerging pest and disease issues, food safety, plant and animal breeding, improved productivity, precision agriculture, biosecurity, and workforce development within AFRI. The report further notes that *"projects which focus on researching enhanced rock weathering and biochar, assess any environmental or health risks, and identify ways to minimize the environmental impact of silicate rock mining, grinding, and transport are also eligible for AFRI awards."*

The Committee also *"directs NIFA to make every effort to strengthen partnerships and expand cooperation between 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions, thereby closing the gap in extension between the two systems and leveraging joint collaborative efforts. The Committee encourages NIFA to*

*consider establishing partnership grants for joint educational and extension activities in States with at least one 1862 institution and at least one 1890 institution, to foster co-creation of new opportunities and new programming to better serve producers.”*

### **Agricultural Research Service (ARS)**

ARS, USDA’s intramural research arm, would receive \$1.79 billion for its Salaries and Expenses account under the House proposal, a modest increase of \$2.5 million or 0.1 percent above the FY 2025 enacted level. The House report names 83 specific topics of interest within ARS, and specifically states the Committee’s rejection of proposed terminations of research partnerships. The list of topics includes support for **Poultry Research** and **Technology to Improve Poultry Health**, of \$2 million and \$1 million in additional funding, respectively, with specific reference to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). The Committee also expressed support for ARS to work with land-grant university partners to expand predictive modeling tools for farm management. The report did not address the budget request proposal to close three ARS units, but would eliminate funding for the Climate Hubs.

### **Research, Education, and Economics (REE)**

Under the Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, the House report includes \$1 million for the **Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA)**, in addition to allowing the use of unspent prior year appropriated funding the report also calls for an Acting Director of AGARDA to be appointed within 90 days which could spur action on initiating projects.

As in prior years, USDA is directed to strengthen partnerships between 1862, 1890, and 1994 institutions, and further directs ARS and NIFA to collaborate with other USDA agencies to increase awareness of farm programs and rural development funding through 1890 extension programs. The House report directs USDA to submit a report detailing direct or indirect funding for research in collaboration with the People’s Republic of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the Islamic Republic of Iran over the last 5 years.

### **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

Under the House bill, FDA would receive \$3.2 billion in discretionary appropriations for FY 2026, a decrease of \$326.2 million below the FY 2025 enacted level. Along with an additional \$3.6 billion in industry-derived user fees, the total program level for the agency in FY 2026 would be \$6.8 billion.

In addition to funding for FDA, the report accompanying the House bill also includes a number of policy statements and directives by the Committee concerning FDA programs and operations. Regarding the development of new human medical products, the Committee continues to express concern about the lack of uniformity in the application of rules between FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) and the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) for the Accelerated Approval Pathway Program. The Committee also continues to urge FDA to engage internal and external experts in artificial intelligence (AI) as part of efforts to support drug development. Further, among other statements, the House report includes new language that encourages FDA to establish modern pathways for cell and gene therapy that embrace novel endpoints for safety and efficacy assessment, and that incorporate the perspective of the patient community on risk tolerance. The report would also direct FDA to continue working with Congress to modernize the regulatory approach for laboratory

developed tests (LDTs).

Concerning human food safety, the House report urges FDA to reestablish its Food Advisory Committee and to include external input from agriculture and food industry stakeholders. FDA is also encouraged to coordinate with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct additional research on ultra-processed foods. Additionally, the House report would direct FDA to develop a validated methodology for detecting and analyzing microplastics in human foods and would delay implementation of the 2022 food traceability rule until at least August 1, 2028.

Other policy provisions included that could have an impact on research and hospitals:

**Preventing Agency Determinations of Misinformation:** Sec. 774 of the bill would prevent USDA, FDA, and other agencies funded by the bill from classifying or facilitating the classification of misinformation, as well as preventing agencies from partnering with or funding nonprofits or other organizations that *“in any way instruct, influence, direct, or recommend private companies to censor, prohibit, or obstruct lawful and constitutionally protected speech of United States persons, including recommending the censoring or removal of content on social media platforms.”*

**Limiting Funds for Critical Race Theory:** Sec. 755 of the bill would prevent USDA, FDA, and other agencies funding in the bill from using funds for *“diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, trainings, programs, offices, officers, policies, or any program, project, or activity that promotes or advances Critical Race Theory or any concept associated with Critical Race Theory.”* A similar provision was also included in the House Ag-FDA Appropriations FY 2025 bill but did not become law.

*Sources and additional information:*

- The House FY 2026 Agriculture/FDA appropriations report is available at:  
<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20250611/118388/HMKP-119-AP00-20250611-SD002.pdf>
- The House FY 2026 Agriculture/FDA Committee bill is available at:  
<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20250611/118388/BILLS-119-FC-AP-FY2026-AP00-FY26AgricultureFullCommitteeMark.pdf>

**FY 2026 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and  
Related Agencies Appropriations**  
(In thousands)

	FY 2025 Enacted	FY 2026 Request	FY 2026 House	FY 2026 House vs. FY 2025 Enacted	FY 26 House vs. FY 26 PBR
<b>Agricultural Research Service, Salaries &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>1,788,063</b>	<b>1,700,000</b>	<b>1,790,550</b>	<b>2,487 (0.1%)</b>	<b>90,550 (5.1%)</b>
<b>National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Discretionary</b>	<b>1,678,750</b>	<b>1,036,956</b>	<b>1,654,100</b>	<b>-24,650 (1.5%)</b>	<b>617,144 (37.3%)</b>
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)	445,200	405,306	455,000	-200 (0.0%)	39,694 (8.9%)
Hatch Act	265,000	0	265,000	0 (0.0%)	265,000 (100.0%)
Smith-Lever Act 3(b) and 3(c)	325,000	175,000	325,000	0 (0.0%)	150,000 (46.2%)
McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act	38,000	20,000	38,000	0 (0.0%)	18,000 (47.4%)
Women and Minorities in STEM Fields	2,000	0	2,000	0 (0.0%)	2,000 (100.0%)
Capacity Building for Non-Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture	6,000	0	6,000	0 (0.0%)	6,000 (100.0%)
Multicultural Scholars, Graduate Fellowship, and Institution Challenge Grants	10,000	0	10,000	0 (0.0%)	10,000 (100.0%)
Education Grants for Hispanic-Serving Institutions	16,000	15,500	16,000	0 (0.0%)	500 (3.1%)
<b>Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)</b>	<b>1,214,009</b>	<b>1,205,209</b>	<b>1,216,009</b>	<b>2,000 (0.2%)</b>	<b>10,800 (0.9%)</b>
<b>Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Salaries &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>1,148,750</b>	<b>1,148,750</b>	<b>1,147,000</b>	<b>-1,750 (0.2%)</b>	<b>-1,750 (0.2%)</b>
<b>Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Direct Appropriation</b>	<b>3,527,150</b>	<b>3,166,866</b>	<b>3,201,000</b>	<b>-326,150 (9.2%)</b>	<b>34,134 (1.1%)</b>