



NACSAA

NORTH AMERICA CLIMATE
SMART AGRICULTURE ALLIANCE

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NACSAA Submits Policy Recommendations To Senate Climate Crisis Panel

The North America Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance (NACSAA) submitted last week a detailed set of policy and program recommendations to the Senate Democrats' Special Committee on the Climate Crisis.

The [submission](#), which was made in response to the Committee's request for input from agriculture and rural leaders, represents a collaborative effort by NACSAA's partners to call attention to the profound and critical role agriculture plays in bridging gaps in policy arenas – from food security and nutrition, to energy and national security, to rural development and job creation, to environmental protection and climate mitigation.

The alliance presented its perspective in [testimony](#) late last year to the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis (HSCCC) from Steering Committee Chairman Fred Yoder, an Ohio corn, soybean and wheat grower who is a past president of the National Corn Growers Association. The alliance followed that testimony with a tranche of [enabling policy suggestions](#) submitted to the House panel in March.

In introducing NACSAA's recommendations, Yoder cites as foremost among the alliance's guiding principles "farmers must be at the center of all discussions and decision-making," followed close behind by the tenet that there is no "silver bullet" to enhance the resilience and potential to mitigate climate change presented by agriculture."

Yoder also cited the alliance's long history of global engagement with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'s landmark agricultural program, the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA).

In response to the Senate Democrats' special committee's question regarding the challenges that America's farmers, ranchers and forestland owners face from weather extremes, NACSAA cites the [Fourth National Climate Assessment Report, Volume II](#). The report details the numerous challenges climate change poses to sustaining and enhancing crop productivity, livestock health, ecosystem integrity and the economic vitality of rural communities. Those include declining food and forage production in regions experiencing increased frequency and duration of drought; and the expanding degradation of irreplaceable soil and water resources as extreme precipitation events increase across our agricultural landscapes; and other challenges.

Yoder explained that in the face of multiple climate-related disasters, NACSAA's farmer-led, continent-wide effort focuses its efforts on helping both producers and the value chain utilize [climate smart agriculture \(CSA\) strategies](#) to enhance the adaptive capacity of North America's food system. The use of the three-pillar CSA framework is foundational to any agricultural climate strategy, the Alliance asserts. The first pillar of CSA acknowledges that farmers must lead by focusing on the economic as well as environmental sustainability of farming operations as they respond to the changing climate.

In response to other questions, the NACSAA submission noted that as farmers and ranchers are among those most directly impacted by climate change, they are uniquely positioned to help deliver solutions. Policymakers can encourage win-win scenarios in which agriculture can both adapt to, and present a solution for, climate change: CSA's Pillar Two and Pillar Three.

A question from the committee about existing policy tools that may help improve resilience prompted NACSAA to reiterate its House panel recommendation that Congress expand financial assistance to promote and assist voluntary, locally led, incentive-based conservation efforts.

The NACSAA's submission goes on to offer detailed responses and recommendations to committee questions about "promising opportunities" for land managers to benefit from climate action conservation practices and other tools currently in use; tools and strategies that have the most potential for improving resiliency and sequestering carbon; key barriers to the adoption of those practices; and what technical assistance is best suited for both producers and rural communities.

NACSAA's submission closed by noting that with the assistance of Congress, "U.S. agriculture can be at the forefront of resolving food system, energy, environmental and climate challenges and achieving global sustainable development goals."

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