

The Honorable Glenn Thompson
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
400 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

September 20, 2023

Dear Chairman Thompson,

On behalf of Pennsylvania's farmers and ranchers, we thank you for your leadership on the House Agriculture Committee. We are writing to highlight the growing importance of agroforestry, a group of land management practices – silvopasture, windbreaks, riparian buffers, alley cropping and forest farming – that we are implementing to diversify income and build resilience.

This letter is to ask for your support to elevate and expand policy support for agroforestry in the upcoming Farm Bill.

In the 2017 Census of Agriculture, over 1,600 Pennsylvanian operations reported using at least one agroforestry practice — ***more than any other state in the country***. Pennsylvania agricultural producers are leading the movement to scale this innovative, conservation-focused approach to farming and ranching, and we are calling on you to provide the support we need to continue this momentum.

Agroforestry, which integrates trees and shrubs into agricultural operations, provides multiple benefits to our economies, communities, and landscapes. Agroforestry practices build profitability by diversifying producer revenue streams and introducing high value tree crops to boost our bottom lines. These practices also filter agricultural runoff before it reaches local waterways, while providing habitat for native birds and pollinators. Farms and ranches that leverage agroforestry can sequester more carbon for longer periods of time, improving overall soil health, building resilience to extreme weather, and protecting against erosion.

With a late freeze and devastating flooding challenging Pennsylvania producers already this year, we need Congress to imbed and integrate support for agroforestry adoption in the upcoming Farm Bill. Increasing support for agroforestry through specialized conservation technical assistance, enhanced support in federal conservation programs, authorization for new regional agroforestry centers, and additional marketing opportunities are just some of the opportunities to boost this important sector. In order to ensure a unified approach from USDA to support agroforestry, Congress needs to strengthen agroforestry's role across multiple titles of the Farm Bill.

On behalf of the Pennsylvania agroforestry community, we thank you for your leadership and support.

Sincerely,

Boo Cat Farm LLC
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Cold Comfort
House of Manna

Juniata View Farm
Living Hope Farm
Nature's Nook Farm
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture
Pennsylvania Farmers Union
PennFuture
Propagate Ag
ReImagine Appalachia
Root Mass Farm
The Nature Conservancy Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter
The Walnut Hill Farm
Tim Zug Tomorrow's Homestead
Trees For Graziers