

Healthy Food Gets Short Shrift

Farm Bill Spends Eight Times More on Commodity Crops Than on Fruits, Nuts and Vegetables

Fruit and vegetable growers have historically been left out of agriculture policy, even though they provide foods that are vital for improving America's nutrition and reducing the costly toll of diet-related diseases. The 2008 farm bill began to correct this misguided policy by providing modest but important gains for programs that promote the production, research and marketing of fruits, nuts and vegetables, known also as "specialty crops."

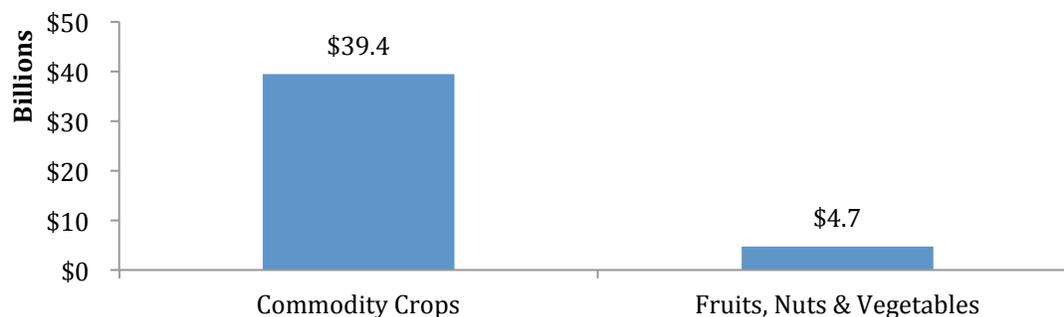
EWG's analysis shows, however, that these programs are still dwarfed by programs tailored to a handful of commodity crops – corn, soybeans, cotton, rice and wheat – that are primarily grown in the Midwest and South and provide feed for livestock and raw material for processed food and fuel for our cars.

From 2008 to 2010, the farm bill spent \$39.6 billion on commodity crops, **more than eight times as much as on specialty crops**, even though their market value – \$320 billion – **was only twice that** of fruits, nuts and vegetables. During that period, the farm bill spent only \$4.7 billion on specialty crops, while the market value of these crops was estimated at \$170 billion.

The failure to invest in healthy foods has serious consequences for health care costs and the millions of consumers who lack access to affordable fruits and vegetables. Over the past 10 years, vegetable consumption has declined by nine pounds per person, and fewer than 5 percent of adults are eating the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. Diet-related medical costs of four serious illnesses – diabetes, cancer, coronary heart disease and stroke – amount to an estimated \$38 billion a year, and obesity costs are rising beyond \$100 billion annually.

Invest in Health. With mounting pressure to cut spending in the 2012 Farm Bill, lawmakers must ensure that some of the resources saved by cutting wasteful commodity and crop insurance subsidy programs be directed towards **research, marketing and procurement** programs to increase consumption of healthy and sustainable food. Key programs include the **Farmers Market Promotion Program, Value-Added Producer Grant Program, Senior Farmers Market Program** and the highly successful **Fruit and Vegetable Program**, which provides low-income children with healthy snacks in 4,640 schools nationwide and 144 California schools. Our analysis found that fresh snacks could be provided daily to an additional 320 low-income schools by redirecting the \$9.5 million in subsidies that went to just eight cotton farms in California in 2009. EWG also recommends increasing funding for the **Specialty Crop Block Grant Program** and expanding its mandate to include increasing the consumption and availability of locally grown specialty crops.

Farm Bill Spending: Commodity Crops vs. Fruits, Nuts and Vegetables, 2008-2010



Note: Disaster payments are excluded from these totals

Farm Bill Funding for Fruits, Nuts and Vegetables: 2008-2010

	2008		2009		2010		2008-2010	
	US	CA	US	CA	US	CA	US	CA
Award Totals (in millions)	\$1,412	\$352.6	\$1,591.0	\$408.5	\$1,701.4	\$419.1	\$4,704.5	\$1,180.1
<i>Procurement/Nutrition</i>	461.0	110.4	565.1	134.6	634.9	137.5	1,6700.0	382.6
Purchase of Fruits and Vegetables for Distribution (includes processed foods)	338.2	102.1	420.2	123.8	446.1	123.8	1,204.5	349.7
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program	48.9	2.8	72.5	5	110.3	7.7	231.7	15.5
Department of Defense Fresh Program (fresh fruit and vegetable purchases for schools)	52.1	4.7	50	5	65	5.2	167.1	14.9
Senior Farmers Market Program	21.8	0.8	22.4	0.8	22.5	0.8	66.7	2.5
<i>Marketing and Promotion</i>	89.6	35.1	130.6	50.9	135.5	54.1	355.7	140.2
Market Access Program ¹	64.8	31.2	60.6	31.7	65.2	31.9	190.6	94.8
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program	9.3	1.7	48.5	16.3	54.4	17.3	112.2	35.3
Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops	3.9	0.7	5.2	0.7	7.3	4.2	16.4	5.6
Value Added Producer Grants Program	6.9	1.2	9.1	1.4	0	0	16	2.6
Farmers Market Promotion Program	3.4	0.3	5	0.5	5	0.4	13.4	1.2
Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grants	0.8	0	1.1	0	2.6	0	4.5	0
Quality Samples Program ¹	0.5	0.03	1.1	0.3	1	0.3	2.6	0.7
<i>Research, Education, and Outreach</i>	324.8	50.4	329.9	54.9	362.9	70.9	1,017.6	176.8
USDA Specialty Crop Research ^{2,3}	316	50	306	50.8	302	48.4	924.0	149.2
Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention	0	0	12	2.7	45	19.7	57.0	22.4
Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program	8.8	0.4	8.6	0.5	9.6	0.3	27.0	1.3
National Clean Plant Network	0	0	3.3	0.9	6.3	2.5	9.6	3.4
<i>Crop Insurance</i>	536.7	156.6	565.4	168.0	559.1	156.5	1,661.2	481.1
Crop Insurance Premium Subsidies	413.1	121.7	446.4	133.1	440.6	123.5	1,300.1	378.3
Administrative and Operating Expenses	123.6	34.9	119.0	34.9	118.5	33.0	361.1	102.8

Sources available upon request

1. Specialty crop component
2. Includes Specialty Crop Research Initiative, specialty crop components of Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), Agriculture Food Research Initiative and other NIFA funded research.
3. California research totals are estimates based on the percentage of specialty crops grown in California compared to total USDA research expenditures in state.

Farm Bill Programs that Support Specialty Crops (Fruits, Nuts, Vegetables)

Agriculture Food Research Initiative – AFRI provides research, education and extension grants through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) that address problems in sustaining agricultural production, including specialty crops, on a local and national level.

Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program – Run by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) and the Office of Advocacy and Outreach, this program provides funds to organizations that offer risk management training to limited resource, socially disadvantaged, underserved, and beginning farmers and ranchers.

Crop Insurance Premium Subsidies Federally subsidized crop insurance is available to farmers if their crop is an eligible crop for their area. The government provides 60% catastrophic coverage to farmers at no cost to the farmer.

DOD Fresh Program (fresh fruit and vegetable purchases for schools) – The Department of Defense (DOD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program provides Section 32 funds to procure fresh fruits and vegetables for use in institutions participating in the National School Lunch Act, to increase the variety of fresh fruit and vegetables available to schools.

Farmers Market Promotion Program – FMPP provides grants for agricultural cooperatives, producer networks and associations, and other organizations to improve and expand domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program – This program is administered at the national level by the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and at the state level by participating states primarily through the State Departments of Education. The program focuses on introducing low-income children to a variety of produce, combating childhood obesity through improved eating habits, and providing healthier snack choices in schools.

Section 32 Purchase of Fruits and Vegetables for Distribution – Since 1935, this permanent appropriation has set aside 30% of annual customs receipts to purchase fruits, vegetables and nuts (in frozen, canned, dried or fresh form) for use in domestic nutrition assistance programs including child nutrition, and school lunch. Most of the appropriation is administered by the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is earmarked for child nutrition programs; the remainder is administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Market Access Program MAP is focused on helping U.S. producers, including specialty crop producers, and other organizations to promote U.S. agricultural products and expand export markets through consumer promotions, market research, technical assistance, and trade servicing.

National Clean Plant Network – NCPN is a partnership between the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CREES). Its purpose is to establish a network of clean plant centers to diagnose and eliminate pathogens and provide clean plant material to states and to private nurseries and producers for certified clean plant programs.

Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention – Provides funding under section 10201 of the 2008 Farm Bill to combat the introduction and distribution of plant pests and diseases that pose a threat to U.S. agricultural and environmental concerns.

Quality Samples Program – QSP focuses on enhancing exports of U.S. agricultural products by helping U.S. agricultural trade organizations to provide samples to potential overseas customers to demonstrate the quality and usability of U.S. agricultural products.

Senior Farmers Market Program – The purpose of the program is to provide senior citizens increased access to locally-produced, fresh, healthy foods, increase the domestic consumption of agricultural products, and to support the

development of domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community support agriculture programs via grants to states, U.S. Territories, and tribal governments.

Small Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grants – The Office of Rural Development provides support for small and socially disadvantaged agricultural producers and cooperatives in rural areas to help support job creation and rural economic welfare.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – This program was authorized in 2004 with the sole purpose of enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops, which include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture.

Specialty Crop Research and Extension Program – SCRI provides grants to solve agricultural industry concerns via research and extension activities. The grants cover five focus areas including research to improve crop characteristics; programs to identify and mitigate threats from pests and diseases, including threats to specialty crop pollinators; programs to improve production efficiency, productivity, and profitability; new innovations and technology; and methods that address potential food safety hazards in the production and processing of specialty crops.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education – Established in 1988, SARE provides grants to fund on-going innovations in sustainable agriculture to every U.S. state and Island Protectorate.

Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops – The TASC program provides funding for projects to address and overcome threats and barriers to the export of U.S. specialty crops, including technical, sanitary, and phytosanitary obstacles.

Value Added Producer Grant Program – VAPG provides grants to support the marketing of value-added agricultural products, including specialty crops, as well as for farm-based renewable energy.