



Craig McNamara
Board President
Owner, Sierra Orchards

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Kerry Tucker, CEO
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Dear Members of the California Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture, we strongly encourage congressional action on the 2012 Farm Bill prior to January 1, 2013. The farm bill is of critical importance to California and the nation in supporting jobs, investing in rural communities, and enhancing our agricultural infrastructure.

As the nation's largest agricultural state with a record \$43.5 billion in farm receipts inaction on the farm bill will have direct repercussions on California's economy. Within international trade, California agricultural exports stimulate an additional \$22 billion in economic activity within state. Export growth and market development programs are provisions supported within the farm bill.

We also understand the impact to our economy in terms of health care costs. More than \$21 billion is spent in California on health care and lost productivity as a result of diet related illness (obesity). The specialty crop and nutritional programs contained within the farm bill assist in promoting healthy foods within our communities that help to lessen the impact of diet related illness.

The farm bill is not only about agriculture, it is about conservation programs to support clean water and clean air; nutrition programs to assist those impacted by food insecurity; and research to ensure food safety and to promote technical innovation and improved efficiencies on the farm. We need a farm bill for California that meets the diverse needs of this state and provides for a robust food and farming system.

We respectfully request that you take action to help pass a 2012 Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

Craig McNamara
President

cc: Members, U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Members, U.S. House Committee on Agriculture
The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor
Secretary Karen Ross, California Department of Food and Agriculture

