



INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY
PRESS RELEASE

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About IATP

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota with an office in Geneva.

Health leaders call for healthy Farm Bill

Next Farm Bill should put Americans on path to healthier eating and living

MINNEAPOLIS – U.S. health professionals are calling on new leadership in Congress to make health a priority in writing the next Farm Bill. National health leaders, including Dr. Andrew Weil and Dr. Marion Nestle, have signed onto a “Charter for a Healthy Farm Bill.” (See the full list of signatories at HealthyFoodAction.org.)

The Charter for a Healthy Farm Bill calls for a food system that incorporates health into the entire lifecycle of how food is produced, processed, consumed and disposed. Such a food system must protect the environment as well as ensure farmers and workers are fairly compensated. The charter’s principles emphasize a food system that is healthy, sustainable, resilient, fair, diverse, economically balanced and transparent.

Congress is expected to begin work on the five-year Farm Bill this year. The Farm Bill includes programs for farmers and for food assistance. Traditionally, Congress has not integrated public health issues into Farm Bill programs, despite strong scientific evidence that food production and consumption patterns are linked to rising health costs and associated diseases.

“The Farm Bill helps create an American food environment where unhealthy food is the cheapest and most readily available,” said David Wallinga, M.D., of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. “Given the enormous health costs of obesity and other food-related epidemics, integrating health goals into the next Farm Bill is a good investment and smart public policy—a real no-brainer.”

“Healthy food is fundamental for good health,” says noted physician Dr. Andrew Weil. “It makes sense that the Farm Bill should encourage production of more foods that are good for our health and are grown in ways that do not undermine our health.”

“The links between agriculture, public health and the environment become more apparent every day,” says Marion Nestle PhD, of New York University and author of *Food Politics*. “The next revision of the Farm Bill presents the perfect opportunity to create American food policies that promote healthier and more sustainable diets for everyone.”

Healthy Food Action, a project of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, works to engage health professionals as advocates for a healthier, more sustainable food system. Read the full charter at www.healthyfoodaction.org.