

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0552

September 21, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture

The Honorable Michael Conaway
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture

Dear Chairman Roberts, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Stabenow, and Ranking Member Peterson:

As you work to craft a conference agreement on Farm Bill reauthorization, we write as chairs of the Congressional Algae Caucus to urge you to include the strongest possible support for algae agriculture.

Algae production for food, feed, biomaterials and other value-added products has the potential to greatly expand the nation's agricultural base and generate high quality jobs and economic development in regions of the country that are most in need. Algae technologies are also helping to transform daunting environmental challenges into economic opportunities. We see this in demonstrations now underway using algae to capture carbon dioxide from power plants and other high-emission sources. We also see this in algae-based recovery of nitrogen and phosphorus from municipal, industrial and agricultural sources, reducing harmful nutrient loading in the nation's waterways. Unfortunately, existing U.S. agriculture policy risks limiting the growth of this promising industry through explicit exclusion or omission of algae from key USDA programs.

Both the House-passed and Senate-passed versions of the Farm Bill include important provisions in support of algae agriculture. We thank you for inclusion of these provisions. However, the language of the provisions in the two bills is inconsistent, and several vital provisions proposed during Farm Bill consideration were not included in either final bill.

We ask you to provide algae agriculture the support it merits by including the following provisions in your conference report:

1. **Algae Research Initiative** - Proposed in the Cornyn-Udall Senate floor amendment SA 3205, but not brought to a vote, the SA 3205 language improves on the Algae Agriculture Research Program language that was included in section 7208 of the House-passed bill (via Dunn Amendment #6 during markup) by providing specific research priorities and necessary authorization. SA 3205 should be included in the conference report.

2. **Crop Assistance for Algae** – The absence of an established crop insurance program for algae production has been reported as the single greatest barrier to the establishment of new algae farms and the expansion of existing farms. Section 9 of House bill H.R. 5373, the *Algae Agriculture Act*, includes two key, no-cost provisions that would begin to pave the way for algae crop insurance. Modeled on provisions included on a bipartisan basis in the 2014 Farm Bill to lay the groundwork for crop insurance for sorghum, H.R. 5373 authorizes a study on development of crop insurance for algae and study adds explicit eligibility for algae under the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program. Section 9 of H.R. 5373 should be included in the conference report.

3. **Elimination of Algae BCAP Exclusion** – Algae is inexplicably excluded from Collection, Harvest, Storage and Transportation (CHST) payments under the Title IX Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP). This exclusion is eliminated under section 9110 of the Senate-passed bill. Section 9110 of the Senate-passed bill should be included in the conference report.

4. **Recycled Carbon Fixes** – Definitional changes are needed to ensure eligibility of carbon-recycled products made with algae and other biological Carbon Capture and Use (CCU), as outlined in section 8 of the H.R. 5373, the *Algae Agriculture Act*. The Bennet-Whitehouse Senate floor amendment SA 3342 – based on H.R. 6457, the *Carbon Utilization Act* – proposed to include these vital, no-cost fixes, but the amendment was not included in the final bill. SA 3342 should be included in the conference report.

Thank you for your leadership and support.

Sincerely,



Scott Peters
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress