



2012 Farm Bill Reauthorization

Agriculture farmworkers and small farmers play an influential role in preparing and harvesting America's crops. While many of the 2.5 million farm workers are primarily Hispanic, many represent other groups as well. The majority face barriers that most American job-seekers do not have, such as language barriers and minimal education. However, they have a hard work ethic that ultimately leads to feeding most American families. The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) seeks to provide the mechanism to educate disadvantaged young farm workers. Ultimately, if Hispanic agriculture farmworkers and small farmers and their children are more educated, they will contribute more meaningfully to meeting the current and future demands for jobs in agriculture, food science and safety, bio-energy and environmental sciences and other related fields.

The HACU Legislative Agenda for the Reauthorization of the Farm Bill during the 112th Congress builds on HACU's success in achieving major provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill, most notably the creation of a new cohort of Hispanic-Serving Agriculture Colleges and Universities (HSACUs) and a number of authorized programs to support them. Final regulations for certifying HSACUs have not been released, and Congress has not appropriated funding for HSACU programs.

These seven provisions consist of competitive grant programs for institutional capacity building, fundamental and applied research, extension services support and an endowment fund for HSACUs and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), as well as increased authorization levels for the original HSI program and a scholarship program for students of forestry and related fields at HSIs. HACU is appealing to Congress to reauthorize these provisions in the 2012 Farm Bill Reauthorization.

Absent in the provisions authorized in 2008 is a grant program to improve supply, stability, safety and training of the nation's agricultural labor force under Title XIV Miscellaneous - Sec. 14204 of the 2008 Farm Bill reauthorization.

HACU therefore recommends the inclusion of the following provisions in the authorization of the 2012 Farm Bill under Sec. 14204 of the 2008 Farm Bill reauthorization to be added as Sec. 14204.2:

- **A \$40M competitive grants program authorized for HSACUs to train Hispanic farm workers and other Hispanic youth working in agriculture-related fields for jobs requiring skills in new technologies in agriculture, food science and safety, bio-energy and environmental sciences, and other related skills as the Secretary may determine to be appropriate.**
- **A \$5M special scholarship program for Hispanic youth from families employed in agriculture and food processing who demonstrate an interest in pursuing a career in the agriculture and food science industry or related areas.**