



S. 2862, the *American Farmers Feed the World Act of 2023*

Introduced by Senators Braun, Tester, Marshall, and Ricketts

Origins: In 1954, Congress passed the *Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act* into law, providing statutory authority for the Food for Peace program (FFP). Since the beginning, FFP was designed to address domestic grain commodity surpluses and also feed vulnerable people around the world. For 65 years, these programs have enjoyed bipartisan support because they are simple, effective, and directly connect American-grown commodities to people in need.

Diluted Role for Commodities: Since then, FFP's authority has incrementally expanded, but its purpose has never changed: feed hungry people with American-grown food. However, new programs (e.g., Emergency Food Security Program, Community Development Program, etc.) have come online and diluted the role of American-grown commodities in the U.S. international food aid portfolio. In fact, every enacted change to international food aid programs has driven programs *away* from in-kind commodity assistance.

Emergency and Non-Emergency Programs: Through FFP, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) operates both an Emergency and a Non-Emergency program. The Emergency program provides humanitarian food assistance to populations facing severe and immediate need due to conflict and natural disasters. The Non-Emergency program addresses chronic malnutrition, food security, and resilience.

Other Uses of FFP Funds: Within FFP, USAID may spend up to 20 percent of its funding on administrative costs, market-based modalities, and community building purposes (collectively "202(e) spending"). The majority of the community building interventions ("Resilience Food Security Activities") performed under FFP take place under the Non-Emergency Program and include support for small-scale farmers, kitchen gardens, and small business training.

Opportunity Cost of Diverted Funds: Recently, more than 10 percent of FFP's budget has gone to programming that uses little to no food. If this same money was used to feed people, it would have purchased an additional 500,000 metric tons of U.S. commodities to feed more than 8 million people (including logistics costs).

American Farmers Feed the World Act: In an era of ballooning international aid programs, this bill provides more structure to FFP. Without these much-needed guardrails, the role of American-grown commodities in international food aid programs will continue to diminish. While community building interventions can be programmed through other USAID programs, commodity aid only exists in FFP. The *American Farmers Feed the World Act*:

- Reserves half of FFP dollars for purchasing commodities and shipping them overseas,
- Reduces the maximum share for 202(e) spending in FFP from 20 percent to 10 percent,
- Moves key decisionmaking points from USAID to USDA,
- Prohibits the use of food vouchers or cash transfers instead of food, and
- Increases reporting requirements around any waivers granted under FFP.

Put simply, this legislation enshrines a continued role for American farmers in FFP and shines new light on FFP program functions that currently lack accountability and transparency.