

Growing America's Biobased Economy

Issue Background

The strength and success of America's economy increasingly depends on our ability to innovate and provide technological solutions for American farmers, manufacturers, energy producers, retailers and consumers. Biotechnology is at the forefront of discovering, developing and delivering a host of new solutions across these sectors. These new biobased applications are fueling economic growth, job creation and creating new opportunities for small businesses and communities across the country. Biotechnology plays a leading role in strengthening food and energy security, enhancing food safety and nutrition, reducing waste, improving human and animal health and making agricultural and energy production systems more sustainable. And we have only scratched the surface of its potential.

Policy Position

Harnessing the full benefits of biobased applications requires a policy and regulatory environment that helps foster innovation, fuel investment and encourage the entrepreneurial spirit that has made America the leader in feeding, fueling and healing the world. Policymakers can grow and promote the benefits of biobased innovation by supporting these common-sense policies:

- **Foster Innovation & Investment:**
 - Support predictable, streamlined, risk-proportionate, and science-based regulatory oversight across federal agencies for modern biobased agricultural solutions.
 - Support strong statements of public policy and U.S. global leadership in support of gene editing in agriculture.
 - Support the re-evaluation of the U.S. government's current regulatory system for animal biotechnology.
- **Promote Public Health Efforts:** Support "One Health" legislation that enhances interagency coordination and collaboration aimed at preventing and better responding to animal health and zoonotic disease outbreaks. (Advancing Emergency Preparedness Through One Health Act of 2018 (S. 2615))
- **Facilitate a Predictable Marketplace:**
 - Actively seek provisions in trade agreements to support timely and predictable regulatory approvals.
 - Support legislation to reauthorize biotechnology and agriculture trade promotion programs (7 USC 5769). (Growing American Food Exports Act of 2018 (H.R. 5379))
 - Support the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS).
- **Promote Biobased Manufacturing and Rural Jobs:**
 - Support legislation that amends Farm Bill Section 9003 to allow renewable chemical manufacturers and biobased product manufacturers to use the program without requiring biofuels production and reauthorizes USDA Bio Preferred Program.
 - Support full mandatory funding for Farm Bill energy title programs.
- **Foster Rural Development:** Call for a resolution stating the potential benefits of innovative biotechnology in agriculture, including the health and economic development implications for rural America. This resolution would include a sense of Congress on ways to improve regulations and highlight needed international and consumer engagement concepts to capitalize on those benefits.

Key Points

- ✓ A [recent USDA report](#) showed that the biobased products industry contributed \$393 billion and 4.2 million jobs to America's economy in a single year. It also stated the sector grew substantially over the prior year, creating or supporting an additional 220,000 jobs and \$24 billion over that period.
- ✓ The U.S. is the global biobased economy leader. U.S. agriculture exports were valued at more than \$140 billion for FY 2017. These exports drive economic opportunity and good paying jobs across the value chain. However, we need to maintain this leadership in the face of increased global competition. That's why smart and effective public policy is so important.
- ✓ Biotechnology enhanced seeds have added \$72.9 billion in agricultural value to the U.S. economy, to date. Globally, their use has increased crop yields by 22 percent and improved farmer incomes by, on average, 68 percent, all while reducing the frequency of pesticide applications by 8.1 percent over the past 2 decades and reducing CO₂ emissions by 26.7 billion kg in 2015 alone (equal to removing 1.9 million cars from the road for one year).
- ✓ Biopharmaceutical companies are using biotechnology and animals to develop or deliver technologies that have the potential to transform the prevention and treatment of human diseases like Ebola, cancer, diabetes, and influenza.
- ✓ Microbial and algae-based innovations are being increasingly used as effective biological tools to promote better crop yields, defend against pests, and improve the quality of our food and animal feed.
- ✓ Biotechnology is a critical component in the prevention, treatment, and control of diseases in farm and companion animals.
- ✓ Using biotechnology, companies are improving conventional biofuel processes, furthering advanced and cellulosic biofuel production technologies, and speeding development of new energy crops. In the first 12 years of the RFS program, biofuels displaced nearly 2.5 billion barrels of imported oil and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 780 million metric tons.