



Analysis of the FY 2017 Senate Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill | May 20, 2016

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its fiscal year (FY) 2017 [spending bill](#) for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies (S. 2956) on May 19 (the bill had marked up in the Subcommittee earlier in the week). The House passed its [version](#) of the legislation (H.R. 5054) in April. So far, neither chamber has scheduled the Agriculture appropriations bill for floor consideration, although given that they are relatively uncontroversial, it would not be surprising to see votes on the floor before the summer recess.

At a Glance...

- The Senate bill would provide the Economic Research Service with \$86.8 million, slightly above the FY 2016 level (+1.6%), but 5 percent below the Administration's request. The House bill included a smaller increase.
- The National Agricultural Statistics Service would also receive a modest increase above FY 2016 to \$169.6 million (+0.7%), which is below the President's request. The House had proposed flat funding.
- The Senate bill includes \$1.4 billion (+2.8%) for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The House, Senate, and Administration have all recommended a \$25 million increase (+7.1%) for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.

Summarized below are the Senate Appropriations Committee's proposals for Economic Research Service, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The Committee's full report can be found [here](#), and audio from the markup is posted on the Committee [website](#).

Economic Research Service and National Agricultural Statistics Service

The Senate bill provides small increases (though larger than those proposed by the House) to the USDA's two statistical agencies, the Economic Research Service (ERS) and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). ERS would receive a total of \$86.8 million, \$1.4 million above FY 2016 and \$800,000 above the House's proposal, though five percent less than the Administration requested. The bill would provide a \$1.2 million increase to NASS, bringing its FY 2017 funding level to \$169.6 million, including \$42.4 million for the Census of Agriculture. Language in the [committee report](#) directs both ERS and NASS to support data collection and analysis related to organic farming.

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) would receive \$1.4 billion for FY 2017, which is a \$37.2 million increase from FY 2016 and \$22.5 million above the House amount, though again, below the President's request. The House, Senate, and Administration did agree, however, on a discretionary funding level for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) (which gives competitive research grants) of \$375 million, which represents a \$25 million increase over FY 2016 and the highest level at which AFRI has ever been funded.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate	Senate vs. FY 2016	Senate vs. Request	House vs. Senate
Economic Research Service	85.4	91.3	86.0	86.8	1.6%	-5.0%	-0.9%
National Agricultural Statistics Service	168.4	176.6	168.4	169.6	0.7%	-4.0%	-0.7%
Census of Agriculture	42.2	42.2	41.9	42.2	0.0%	0.0%	-0.8%
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1326.5	1374.0	1341.2	1363.7	2.8%	-0.7%	-1.7%
Agricultural and Food Research Initiative	350.0	375.0	375.0	375.0	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Hatch Act	243.7	243.7	243.7	243.7	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

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