

Seeds & Breeds

Seeds and Breeds for the Future Act

Public plant and animal breeding programs face reduced budgets, decreasing institutional backing, rising labor and land expenses, and limited federal funding. Over the past several decades, universities nationwide have been cutting back or discontinuing their public plant and animal breeding initiatives. This trend has led to a shortage of traditionally bred cultivars and breeds tailored for distinct regional environments. The absence of regionally adapted seeds and breeds puts our domestic agricultural industry at risk of disturbances, jeopardizing the competitiveness of farmers both domestically and internationally.

SEEDS AND BREEDS FOR THE FUTURE

The Seeds and Breeds for the Future Act [S.3097](#), introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin (WI) aims to support research and development into ready-to-use, regionally-adapted and publicly available seed varieties and animal breeds.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

- Creates a \$75 million carveout in USDA research grants for the development of new public seeds (“cultivars”) and animal breeds.
- Ensures public accessibility of the plants and breeds developed using grant funding carve out in the Seeds & Breeds for the Future Act.
- Promotes efficient use of grants by establishing a coordinator to develop a strategy for public cultivar research and an interagency working group informed by stakeholders to coordinate activities of the multiple research agencies.

- Ensures that American farmers, producers and businesses are the beneficiaries of the USDA investments into the research and development of seeds and breeds.
- Outlines priorities for competitive research grants including: public cultivars and animal breeds that are regionally adapted, bred for environmental resilience including changing climate, bred to enhance the nutritional and health outcomes of local and Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians, or bred with beneficial and compatible characteristics and behaviors for dual-use renewable energy-agricultural systems.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Securing a resilient food system in the face of increasing environmental challenges is critical to national security and international competitiveness. Investments in regionally-adapted and publicly-available seed varieties and animal breeds will help farmers confront drought and varying growing conditions by providing improved plant and animal varieties bred for specific regional growing conditions. This will enable the U.S. to maintain a robust and resilient food and agricultural system.



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