

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3637

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to better assist producers who are voluntarily making the transition to organic production systems, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2017

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to better assist producers who are voluntarily making the transition to organic production systems, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Homegrown Organic
5 Act of 2017”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROGRAMS FOR PRODUCERS TRANSITIONING TO**
2 **ORGANIC PRODUCTION SYSTEMS.**

3 (a) CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM.—Section
4 1235(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
5 3835(f)) is amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “or a socially”
7 and inserting “a farmer or rancher transitioning to
8 organic farming or ranching, or a socially”; and

9 (2) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(3) CAP ON ENROLLMENT.—The Secretary
11 may establish a cap on the number of acres subject
12 to contract modifications described in paragraph (1)
13 with regard to farmers or ranchers transitioning to
14 organic farming or ranching if the Secretary deter-
15 mines that such a cap would be necessary to miti-
16 gate any significant erosion of organic commodity
17 premiums.

18 “(4) DEFINITION.—In this section, a ‘farmer or
19 rancher transitioning to organic farming or ranch-
20 ing’ means a farmer or rancher who agrees to gain
21 organic certification under the Organic Foods Pro-
22 duction Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) while
23 the land to be transferred pursuant to a contract
24 modification described in paragraph (1) is subject to
25 a contract under the conservation reserve program.”.

1 (b) CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.—Sec-
2 tion 1238G of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C.
3 3838g) is amended by adding at the end the following:

4 “(j) ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIC TRANSITION
5 BUNDLES.—

6 “(1) AVAILABILITY OF ORGANIC TRANSITION
7 BUNDLES.—In entering into conservation steward-
8 ship contracts under section 1238F, the Secretary
9 shall make organic transition bundles available to
10 producers transitioning to organic production.

11 “(2) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for a con-
12 tract that includes an organic transition bundle, a
13 producer shall agree to gain organic certification
14 under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7
15 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) while participating in a con-
16 tract under the conservation stewardship program.

17 “(3) ORGANIC TRANSITION BUNDLE.—In this
18 subsection, the term ‘organic transition bundle’
19 means a grouping of conservation activities that the
20 Secretary determines are—

21 “(A) appropriate for producers transition-
22 ing into organic production, including organic
23 cropping, livestock, and grazing systems; and

1 “(B) based on existing groupings or bun-
2 dles of conservation activities designed for or-
3 ganic producers.

4 “(4) ENROLLMENT.—The Secretary may cap
5 enrollment of land to be covered by conservation
6 stewardship contracts that include organic transition
7 bundles per year, on a commodity basis, if the Sec-
8 retary determines that such a cap would be nec-
9 essary to mitigate any significant erosion of organic
10 commodity premiums.

11 “(5) TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS.—The Sec-
12 retary may terminate a conservation stewardship
13 contract that includes payments for organic transi-
14 tion bundles, or modify such a contract to terminate
15 such payments, if the Secretary determines that the
16 producer—

17 “(A) is not pursuing organic certification;

18 or

19 “(B) is not in compliance with the Organic
20 Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501
21 et seq).”.

22 (c) REMOVAL OF PAYMENT CAP FOR CERTAIN PAY-
23 MENTS WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCEN-
24 TIVES PROGRAM.—Section 1240B(i) of the Food Security
25 Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa–2(i)) is amended—

- 1 (1) by striking paragraph (3); and
- 2 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as
- 3 paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively.

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