Farm Bill Implementation

SITUATION

The 2018 Farm Bill was signed into law in December 2018 and contained language championed by NPPC to establish permanent, mandatory funding for animal disease prevention and preparedness efforts. The bill also funds the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program that supports export markets for U.S. farm goods. The programs are funded at not less than $200 million and $34.5 million, respectively.

The five-year agricultural blueprint includes $120 million for the first four years for animal health and disease preparedness, requiring at least $5 million a year for the National Animal Disease Preparedness Program. Money can be allocated for a foreign animal disease vaccine bank; for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), which provides disease surveillance and diagnostic support; and, through block grants, for state efforts to prepare for any foreign animal disease outbreak. The NAHLN is authorized an additional $30 million a year for all five years of the bill, and in the fifth year another mandatory $30 million is allocated for all three programs, with at least $18 million going to the state block grants. The bill also gives the USDA secretary discretion to allocate additional funds, as necessary, for the vaccine bank and the disease preparedness program.

NPPC POSITION

A Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine bank is needed to quickly contain and eradicate an outbreak and prevent catastrophic financial losses for the agriculture economy. U.S. pork fought hard to secure vaccine funds to protect animal well-being and farmers’ livelihood from the very real FMD threat facing the industry today. The 2018 Farm Bill directed the USDA Secretary to “prioritize the acquisition and maintenance of sufficient quantities of FMD vaccine.” USDA must utilize the funds provided by Congress to carry out its intent to help safeguard rural economies and the livestock sector.

FAST FACTS

- An FMD outbreak would immediately close all export markets to U.S. meat; for the U.S. pork industry exports are more than 25% of total production.
- According to Iowa State University economists, the impact of an FMD outbreak over 10 years would be:
  - Beef and pork sectors — more than a $128 billion loss
  - Corn and soybean farmers — lose $44 billion and nearly $25 billion, respectively.
  - Job losses — more than 1.5 million.
- There are 24 different FMD strains active in countries worldwide.