

U.S. Senate Debates Farm Bill MAP Funding Survives Challenge

Written by U.S. Grains Council
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The U.S. Grains Council today expressed thanks to the National Corn Growers Association, the National Sorghum Producers, the National Barley Growers Association, and other allied organizations for their successful support of the Market Access Program (MAP) during Senate debate on the pending Farm Bill.

The 2012 Farm Bill (S. 3240) is currently under consideration in the Senate and is drawing heated debate. Among the many amendments was one that called for slashing MAP funding by 20 percent (\$40 million annually). The amendment would also have imposed arbitrary limitations on which international marketing activities could utilize the remaining funds. Thanks to effective advocacy by a wide range of groups supportive of U.S. export promotion efforts, the amendment was defeated today by a vote of 30 ayes to 69 nays.

“MAP funding in conjunction with other smaller funding programs has been an important contributor to the success of U.S. coarse grain and DDGS exports worldwide. U.S. agriculture trade is one of the few U.S. trade areas that maintains a surplus. Without MAP funding, U.S. grains exports will face a much tougher uphill battle,” said Dr. Wendell Shauman, USGC chairman.

Trade enhances global prosperity, expands U.S. exports, and promotes jobs and economic growth at home. Many U.S. companies, trade associations, and federal, state, and local governments work to increase opportunities for U.S. exporters. Some of these efforts promote the sale of particular products or brands. Others are broader in scope and promote entire

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industry sectors or a “made in the USA” brand.

MAP is a longstanding program through which the Foreign Agricultural Service has partnered with “co-operator” organizations to work jointly on projects of mutual interest. The U.S. Grains Council has utilized MAP funding for a variety of programs that expand and defend export markets for U.S. corn, sorghum, barley, distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS), and other value added products. The Council’s current programs encompass more than 50 countries.

- Capacity building programs assist foreign dairy, cattle, swine, and poultry producers in modernizing their operations, expanding local demand for their products, and thus increasing demand for U.S. sourced feed grains and DDGS.
- Trade servicing programs assist foreign importers in navigating the complexities of international financial, regulatory, and trading systems.
- The Council also works aggressively on trade policy questions including international acceptance of new production technologies, implementation of trade agreements to reduce tariff and other barriers to U.S. exports, and fair enforcement of existing trade agreements to discourage unfair foreign subsidies and create a more level playing field.

Global corn production continues to rise as technology drives yield increases and new competitors such as Brazil, Argentina, and the Ukraine ramp up production for export. Global grains markets are intensely competitive. MAP is an important tool in assisting U.S. producers and agribusinesses in developing and defending export markets.

Agriculture is an often-underappreciated hero of the U.S. international trade balance, one of the few sectors in which the U.S. consistently earns a major trade surplus. As the global middle class continues to grow, as world food demand increases rapidly, and as international export competition intensifies, the importance of agricultural export promotion will continue to grow. The U.S. Grains Council is committed to defending and increasing U.S. market share, and the Council is appreciative of the help of allied organizations in preserving essential market development tools like MAP.

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The U.S. Grains Council is a private, non-profit partnership of farmers and agribusinesses committed to building and expanding international markets for U.S. barley, corn, grain sorghum

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and their products. The Council is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 9 international offices that oversee programs in more than 50 countries. Financial support from our private industry members, including state checkoffs, agribusinesses, state entities and others, triggers federal matching funds from the USDA resulting in a combined program value of more than \$28.3 million.

The U.S. Grains Council does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital/family status. Persons with disabilities, who require alternative means for communication of program information, should contact the U.S. Grains Council