

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development & FDA

Budget Hearing- US Department of Agriculture

April 16, 2026

Witness: Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins

Highlights:

The hearing reviewed the Administration's proposed FY 2027 budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including significant reductions in discretionary funding and planned shifts in program priorities. Members discussed how the proposal could affect agricultural producers, food prices, nutrition assistance, and agency capacity, with attention to balancing fiscal constraints and service delivery.

Key Points:

- The Administration requested \$19.1 billion in discretionary funding for USDA in FY 2027.
  - This represents a \$5.1 billion cut (nearly 28%) compared to the prior year's enacted level.
- The Administration characterized the proposal as a refocusing of USDA on "core missions", including farm support, food security, and market competitiveness.
- Representatives questioned the proposed budget cuts, arguing two key areas that would be affected:
  - Support for farmers/ rural communities- Reduction of support at a time of ongoing economic stress through USDA programs (Farm Service Agency, US Forest Service).
    - Budget reductions could affect technical assistance, loans, and grants that Tribal farmers and ranchers rely on, especially through USDA agencies like FSA, NRCS, and Rural Development.
    - Reduced support may limit Tribes' ability to participate in NRCS programs to steward trust lands, manage watersheds, and protect culturally significant resources.
  - Undermining nutrition assistance- cuts to particularly the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), among other food aid programs will exacerbate food insecurity amid rising household costs.
    - Proposed deep cuts to USDA discretionary funding (-28%) raise concerns for programs heavily used in Indian Country, including SNAP, FDPIR, WIC, and school meals.

- Secretary Rollins responded that the budget was a strategic reprioritization rather than an abandonment of USDA programs. She acknowledged the political and practical challenges facing the appropriations process but stressed shared goals around food security and farmer viability.