

House Agriculture Committee

For the Purpose of Receiving Testimony from the Honorable Brooke L. Rollins, Secretary,
U.S. Department of Agriculture

June 4, 2026

Highlights:

This hearing focused on congressional oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), with testimony from Secretary Brooke Rollins. The central theme was the state of the U.S. farm economy, with members debating whether current conditions reflect recovery or ongoing crisis. There was bipartisan agreement on several key concerns, including the need for disaster assistance, support for rural communities, protection from pests and disease, and strengthening domestic agricultural production systems.

Key Points:

- The discussion did not address Tribal eligibility, Indian Country programs, or USDA Tribal engagement.
- Major topics included rising input costs (fuel, fertilizer, labor), declining farm profitability and bankruptcies, and the role of trade policy, tariffs, and global markets.
 - Republicans generally emphasized new trade deals, domestic production, and regulatory reform as signs of progress, while Democrats highlighted financial stress on farmers, high costs, and lost export markets, arguing current policies are exacerbating economic challenges.
- Federal farm support programs and implementation
 - Members discussed delays and adequacy of relief programs, especially for specialty crops and regional disasters such as frost damage and flooding.
- USDA staffing levels and reorganization
 - Members expressed concerns that workforce reductions and relocation plans could limit farmers' access to services like the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and research support.
- Nutrition policy
 - Proposed changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) were debated. The conversation centered on program integrity, fraud detection, and the impact of benefit reductions on food insecurity.
- Agricultural Threats and Infrastructure
 - New World screwworm pest

- Members described this parasite as a serious risk to livestock and food supply chains.
- Discussion highlighted federal response efforts, including containment measures and investments in sterile fly production.
- Other topics included fertilizer supply chain vulnerabilities, efforts to increase domestic production, and broader concerns about agriculture as a national security issue, including foreign ownership of farmland and dependency on foreign inputs.
- Additionally, members raised issues related to research funding, biotechnology (like glyphosate), climate and conservation programs, and rural development, reflecting the wide scope of USDA responsibilities.