South Dakota Farm Bureau®

Policy Update

October 23, 2026

USDA Announces $8 Billion in Economic Assistance to Farmers

On October 19, President Trump and USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins announced $8 billion in economic assistance for farmers through the Harvest Fuel Relief (HFR) program. Through the authorization of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act, USDA will make one-time payments to producers who are facing increased production costs due to market disruptions during this harvest season.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the HFR program using a uniform formula to cover a portion of modeled losses during the 2026 crop year. The national loss average will be based on FSA reported planted acres, Economic Research Service cost of production estimates, and World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates yields and prices. USDA will not require crop insurance to be linked for participation.

Applications have not yet gone live for producers to sign up. Producers can go ahead and create a Login.gov account in advance of the application period announcement. Commodity-specific payment rates for Title I commodities will be released in November. Non-Title I commodity payment rates, including specialty crops, will be released at a later date.

Groundbreaking for New Platte-Winner Bridge

A groundbreaking for the New Platte-Winner Bridge took place this week. The project began on October 3, 2026 and for the remainder of October, crews will set up traffic control, mobilize equipment, and begin constructing the docks that will be used for barges.

It is anticipated that actual construction will begin in early 2027 with completion in 2031, to include the removal of the existing bridge. The new bridge will include the addition of shoulders to provide a total width of 36 ft. compared to the current 28 ft. width. The existing bridge will carry traffic during construction and will be removed from the river after completion of the new bridge and highway.

The Platte-Winner bridge is the third major bridge to be replaced over the Missouri River. The bridge at Yankton was completed in 2008 and the Pierre/Fort Pierre bridge was completed in 2025. Over the next few decades, the remaining Missouri River bridges will also need to be replaced.

Click here to learn more about the project.

2026 General Election Right Around the Corner: November 3, 2026

The South Dakota General Election is on November 3, 2026. South Dakota Farm Bureau is encouraging members to participate and vote on key issues and candidates in our state. Your vote is a direct way to influence decisions affecting South Dakota.

SDFB asked both candidates for Governor to respond to questions about the ag industry in our state. You can find their responses here.

The Secretary of State's office has a voter information portal to help address questions and to see a sample ballot. This election voters will have the opportunity to vote on constitutional officers, legislative seats, local offices, and ballot measures. Click here to access the Secretary of State's Voter Information Portal.

Contact for Questions

Krystil Smit
SDFB Executive Director
Email: k.smit@sdfbf.org
Cell: (605) 261-2960

Matthew Bogue
SDFB State Public Policy Director
Email: Matthew@sdfbf.org
Cell: (605) 377-8833