

Q1 REPORT 2021

A photograph of an older man and a young girl standing in a field of tall grass or wheat, holding hands and looking away from the camera towards a bright sunset. The man is wearing a dark cap, a plaid shirt, and overalls. The girl is wearing a plaid shirt. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The text 'AACI in Action' is overlaid in white, with a red underline under the word 'Action'.

AACI in Action



Table of Contents

- 2 Message from Chair and Vice Chair
- 3 Message from the President
- 4 AACI Leadership
- 6 Leadership at USDA
- 8 New Congress
- 10 Convention Recap
- 12 PAC Update



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR
AND VICE CHAIR

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A sense of optimism usually accompanies the arrival of spring, and that seems particularly true in 2021. With a new Administration and new faces on the Hill, a primary focus of AACI is to educate those who are new to Congress on the critical nature of crop insurance to the economic and environmental sustainability of production agriculture. 2020 presented our farmers and ranchers with unprecedented challenges in the form of both the pandemic and extreme weather events—and crop insurance has been vital in addressing these. There is a powerful message to deliver regarding how important private-sector delivery has been in maintaining a reliable and available source of food and fiber during trying times.

The pandemic is not over, but we are beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. As things begin to open up in the coming months, we are excited about the prospect of returning to more in-person advocacy. As new lawmakers and their staffs juggle issues ranging from climate change initiatives to potential budgetary constraints, stressing the need to “do no harm” to federally reinsured crop insurance is as important as ever. We are optimistic about being able to present this message both virtually during our spring fly-in this May and in person during the fall fly-in we have planned for October.

In the meantime, we will continue to spread the message of our successful and decades-long partnership with the USDA and American taxpayers that has resulted in a stable and highly productive agricultural sector that is the envy of the world.

A new year brings a renewed sense of purpose and action around our advocacy efforts to maintain and grow support for crop insurance. To that end, this first quarter was spent preparing for the next two years as we navigate a different political landscape.

In February, Tom Vilsack was confirmed as the new Secretary of Agriculture. He returns to the position he held for eight years under President Barack Obama. Other confirmations included Katherine Tai as the U.S. Trade Representative and Michael S. Regan as Environmental Protection Agency Administrator. We are still waiting on the confirmation of the Deputy Secretary of USDA and the appointment of the Risk Management Agency Administrator.

On the legislative side of things, Congressional committees have announced their rosters and staff, and hearing activity is already underway in both the Senate and House Agriculture Committees.

From an AACI membership perspective, we have resumed our monthly call/zoom series to discuss critical issues. We are also grateful for the early support of the AACI PAC.

This edition of our quarterly reports highlights these changes and updates and prepares us for the work ahead. As always, please reach out to AACI staff if you have any needs or questions.

We look forward to working with you.



SCOTT GRAVES
President



GRANT ADAMS
Chairman



BENSON LATHAM
Vice Chairman

Leadership



Chairman
GRANT ADAMS
Producers Agriculture Insurance Company



Vice Chairman
BENSON LATHAM
Crop Risk Services

President
SCOTT GRAVES



“There is a powerful message to deliver regarding how important private-sector delivery has been in maintaining a reliable and available source of food and fiber during trying times.”

GRANT ADAMS & BENSON LATHAM

Board of Directors

AACI Board of Directors includes representatives from all categories of its membership – a hallmark value of the association.



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TOM VILSACK, USDA SECRETARY

Prior to his confirmation as USDA Secretary under President Biden, Vilsack served as the USDA Secretary for all eight years under the Obama Administration. In the interim, he led the U.S. Dairy Export Council for almost four years. He's a former governor of Iowa and was considered as a potential running mate for Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign. Vilsack's previous experience running the department was a key component in his selection, as the President preferred someone who could immediately tackle the various hunger and farm crises that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.



JEWEL H. BRONAUGH, USDA DEPUTY SECRETARY

Bronaugh, who is still waiting for confirmation by the Senate, has served as commissioner for the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services since May 2018, but had previously served as Virginia's state executive director for the USDA Farm Service Agency. She was appointed by then-USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack in 2015. Before leading Virginia's FSA offices, Bronaugh was Dean of the College of Agriculture at Virginia State University (VSU) and oversaw its extension, research, and academic programs.

KATHARINE FERGUSON

Chief of Staff in the Office of the Secretary

ROBERT BONNIE

Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Sr. Advisor, Climate, in the Office of the Sec.

MARIBEL DURAN

Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations in the Office of the Secretary

BRANDON CHADERTON

Deputy White House Liaison in the Office of the Secretary

SARA BLEICH, PHD

Sr. Advisor, COVID-19, in the Office of the Secretary

KUMAR CHANDRAN

Sr. Advisor, Nutrition, in the Office of the Secretary

JUSTO ROBLES

White House Liaison in the Office of the Secretary

EYANG GARRISON

Chief of Staff in the Office of the Deputy Secretary

MATT HERRICK

Communications Director in the Office of Communications

MICKEALA CARTER

Deputy Director of Communications in the Office of Communications

ANNE KNAPKE

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations

JASMINE DICKERSON

Legislative Director in the Office of Congressional Relations

ABBEY MELLER

Confidential Assistant in the Office of Congressional Relations

VALERIE MCMAKIN

Legislative Analyst in the Office of Congressional Relations

LIZ ARCHULETA

Director in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

PAUL ZEISS

Confidential Assistant in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

JANIE HIPPI

General Counsel for USDA

DAVID GRAHN

Principal Deputy General Counsel in the Office of General Counsel

GLORIA MONTANO GREENE

Deputy Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation

MIKE SCHMIDT

Sr. Advisor in the Office of the Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation

THARUN VEMULAPALLI

Confidential Assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation

ZACH DUCHENEAUX

Administrator of the Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Bidisha Bhattacharyya – Senior Policy Advisor in the Farm Service Agency (FSA)

MARCUS GRAHAM

Deputy Administrator for Field Operations in the Farm Service Agency

MAE WU

Deputy Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory

Programs

JEREMY ADAMSON

Policy Advisor for the Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs in the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

STACEY DEAN

Deputy Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services

REBECCA PIAZZA

Senior Advisor for Delivery in the Office of the Under Secretary for the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

SANDRA ESKIN

Deputy Undersecretary for Food Safety

JUSTIN MAXSON

Deputy Undersecretary for Rural Development

FARAH AHMAD

Chief of Staff in the Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development

OLUBENGA AJILORE

Sr. Advisor in the Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development

GREGORY PARHAM, DVM

Interim Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration

LYNN OVERMANN

Senior Advisor for Data and Technology in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration

JAMAL HABIBI

Chief of Staff for the Rural Housing Service

STEFFANIE BEZRUKI

Chief of Staff in Rural Business Services

EDYAE CASAPERALTA

Senior Policy Advisor for the Rural Utilities Service Agency

HEATHER DAWN THOMPSON

Director, Office of Tribal Relations

MONICA RAINGE

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Senate Agriculture Committee Members

Democrats (11)

Debbie Stabenow (MI) – Chair
Patrick Leahy (VT)
Sherrod Brown (OH)
Amy Klobuchar (MN)
Michael Bennet (CO)
Kirsten Gillibrand (NY)
Tina Smith (MN)
Richard Durbin (IL)
Cory Booker (NJ) – New Member
Ben Ray Lujan (NM) – New Member
Raphael Warnock (GA) – New Member

Republicans (11)

John Boozman (AR) – Ranking Member
Mitch McConnell (KY)
John Hoeven (ND)
Joni Ernst (IA)
Cindy Hyde-Smith (MS)
Roger Marshall (KS) – New Member
Tommy Tuberville (AL) – New Member
Chuck Grassley (IA)
John Thune (SD)
Deb Fischer (NE)
Mike Braun (IN)

Senate Ag Approps Subcommittee

Democrats

Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) – Chair
Jeff Merkley (D-OR)
Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)
Jon Tester (D-MT)
Patrick Leahy (D-VT)
Brian Schatz (D-HI)
Martin Heinrich (D-NM)

Republicans

John Hoeven (R-ND) – Ranking Member

Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
Susan Collins (R-ME)
Roy Blunt (R-MO)
Jerry Moran (R-KS)
Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS)
Mike Braun (R-IN)

House Agriculture Committee Members

Democrats

Chairman David Scott (GA-13)
Rep. Cheri Bustos (IL-17)
Rep. Alma Adams (NC-12)
Rep. Cindy Axne (IA-3)
Rep. Salud Carbajal (CA-24)
Rep. Jim Costa (CA-16)
Rep. Angie Craig (MN-2)
Rep. Antonio Delgado (NY-19)
Rep. Josh Harder (CA-10)
Rep. Jahana Hayes (CT-5)
Rep. Jim McGovern (MA-2)
Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA-20)
Rep. Al Lawson (FL-2)
Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (NY-18)
Rep. Tom O'Halleran (AZ-1)
Rep. Chellie Pingree (ME-1)
Rep. Stacey Plaskett (VI-AL)
Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-8)
Rep. Abigail Spanberger (VA-7)
Rep. Filemon Vela (TX-34)
Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (AZ-2)
Rep. Sanford Bishop (GA-2) – New Member
Rep. Ann McLane Kuster (NH-2) – New Member
Rep. Lou Correa (CA-46) – New Member
Rep. Ro Khanna of (CA-17) – New Member
Rep. Bobby Rush (IL-1) – New Member
Rep. Gregorio Sablan (NMI-AL) – New Member

Republicans

Ranking Member Glenn 'GT' Thompson (PA-12)
Rep. Austin Scott (GA-8)
Rep. Rick Crawford (AR-1)

Rep. Scott DesJarlais (TN-4)
Rep. Vicky Hartzler (MO-4)
Rep. Doug LaMalfa (CA-1)
Rep. Rodney Davis (IL-13)
Rep. Rick Allen (GA-12)
Rep. David Rouzer (NC-7)
Rep. Trent Kelly (MS-1)
Rep. Don Bacon (NE-2)
Rep. Dusty Johnson (SD-AL)
Rep. Jim Baird (IN-4)
Rep. Jim Hagedorn (MN-1)
Rep. Chris Jacobs (NY-27)
Rep. Troy Balderson (OH-12)
Rep. Michelle Fischbach (MN-7) – New Member
Rep. Tracey Mann (KS-1) – New Member
Rep. Randy Feenstra (IA-4) – New Member
Rep. Michael Cloud (TX-27) – New Member
Rep. Kat Cammack (FL-2) – New Member
Rep. Barry Moore (AL-2) – New Member
Rep. Mary Miller (IL-15) – New Member

House Ag Committee Leadership

Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management

Chair – Rep. Cheri Bustos (IL-17)
Ranking Member – Rep. Austin Scott (R-GA-8)

Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture

Chair – Rep. Jim Costa (CA-16)
Ranking Member – Rep. Dusty Johnson (SD-AL)

Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry

Chair – Rep. Abigail Spanberger (VA-7)
Ranking Member – Rep. Doug LaMalfa (CA-1)

Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations

Chair – Rep. Jahanna Hayes (CT-5)
Ranking Member – Rep. Don Bacon (NE-2)

Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit

Chair – Rep. Antonio Delgado (NY-19)
Ranking Member – Rep. Michelle Fischbach (MN-7)

Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research

Chair – Rep. Stacey Plaskett (VI-AL)
Ranking Member – Rep. Jim Baird (IN-4)

General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee

Democrats

Chair – Cheri Bustos (IL-17)
Angie Craig (MN-02)
Filemon Vela (TX-34)
Salud Carbajal (CA-24)
Tom O'Halleran (AZ-01)
Al Lawson (FL-05)
Sanford Bishop (GA-02)

Republicans

Ranking Member – Austin Scott (GA-08)
Rick Crawford (AR-01)
Rick Allen (GA-12)
David Rouzer (NC-07)
Tracey Mann (KS-01)
Mary Miller (IL-15)

House Ag Approps Subcommittee

Democrats

Chair – Sanford Bishop Jr. (GA-13)
Chellie Pingree (ME-1)
Mark Pocan (WI-2)
Lauren Underwood (IL-14)
Barbara Lee (CA-13)
Betty McCollum (MN-4)
Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-23)
Henry Cuellar (TX-28)
Grace Meng (NY-6)

Republicans

Ranking Member— Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE-1)
Robert Aderholt (R-AL-4)
Andy Harris (R-MD-1)
David Valadao (R-CA-21)
John Moolenaar (R-MI-4)
Dan Newhouse (R-WA-4)

National Crop Insurance Convention

In February, AACI, CIRB, and NCIS virtually hosted the joint 2021 Crop Convention featuring guest speakers Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Ranking Member John Boozman (R-AR), as well as RMA Acting Administrator Richard Flounoy and Agri-Pulse President Sara Wyant.

AACI Chairman Mike Davenport began the virtual session by thanking USDA, especially RMA, for assisting America's producers throughout the COVID pandemic. He noted how the crop insurance program met the needs of America's farmers and ranchers in 2020 in the face of many natural disasters – the derecho, hurricanes, drought, and wildfires among them. Davenport also highlighted AACI's PAC efforts, the recipients of the Champion of Crop Insurance award, and the transition to virtual Congressional outreach due to restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Davenport then introduced AACI President Scott Graves, who provided an outlook for the association's plans in 2021. These plans include monthly membership calls with Members of Congress, officials in the Biden administration, Capitol Hill staff, and others to update AACI members on events and legislation in Washington, D.C. Graves said the association will reconvene their leadership development program, which was delayed because of the pandemic, and host a

virtual spring fly-in in the coming months. Finally, Graves introduced the first guest speaker, Senator John Boozman from Arkansas.

Senator Boozman touched on several topics, from the need to open potential new markets like Cuba and the U.K. to the importance of expanding broadband availability. He highlighted his concerns with Congressional Democrats' plans to address climate change and his opposition in allowing USDA to tap into the Commodity Credit Corporation for carbon credits. He acknowledged it will not be easy to address climate concerns and it will be critical to get input from agriculture stakeholders before any decisions are made with respect to the farming community and climate.

After Senator Boozman spoke, representatives from CIRB provided association updates before introducing guest speaker Senator Debbie Stabenow. Senator Stabenow gave an overview of the provisions of the COVID-19 relief bills and said we need to focus on opening markets and

providing market certainty in future. She noted that climate change will be a top priority and that we need to help farmers scale up environmental practices to so they can lead in addressing the issue. She also said she doesn't want to cut any money from existing Farm Bill programs, and thinks we need to support crop insurance and other risk management tools already in place.

Next, NCIS President Tom Zacharias gave an overview of the weather events of 2020 and thanked RMA for their work to assist the industry. NCIS Chair Kendall Jones praised crop insurance for keeping farmers working during these unprecedented times. They then introduced Agri-Pulse President Sara Wyant, who explained there needs to be a heightened focus on science and technology in the agriculture space, especially as we attempt to tackle complicated topics like climate change. She also said it will be interesting to see how the agriculture industry works with Congress and the Administration to address the climate because it's not easily done and there are a lot of differing opinions.

The last speaker of the event was Acting RMA Administrator, Richard Flounoy. First, Flounoy shared the actions that RMA took to meet the needs of producers amidst the pandemic, including extending deadlines, deferring interest, and allowing self-certification for replant inspections and witness waivers. He also provided topline numbers from 2020 such as: **prevented plant** (10.3 million acres; \$1.7 billion in losses), **hurricane insurance protection** (17.6k policies with \$645 million in liabilities; \$146 million in losses), **the derecho** (\$300 million in losses, mostly IA), and **drought & PRF** (\$2.8 billion in losses). Flounoy went through improvements made to the various livestock programs and noted other program highlights related to quality loss, specialty crop coverage, expanded written agreements, and hemp pilot expansion. Flounoy finished with his outlook for 2021 and said he expects an increase in liability and premium with potential for a new record in liability of as much as \$130 billion.

Thank you to our PAC supporters

Contributions given between January 1, 2021 – March 25, 2021

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Carothers, Douglas
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PAC PIONEER
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Erb, Benjamin
Foster, Shannon
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Grout, Crystal
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Trampel, Roger
Van Weelden, Andrew
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Skinner, Gary
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