



On October 8th, 2020 Rural Investment to Protect Our Environment (RIPE) shared public comments at the Foundation for Food and Agriculture's sixth annual Public Conversation. RIPE's full statement can be viewed below:

RIPE appreciates FFAR's proactive efforts to mobilize farmers through prioritizing agriculture-climate partnerships to support farmers and ranchers implementing climate smart practices to optimize production and improve resiliency, soil health, water quality, water use, and soil health, while simultaneously capturing carbon.

However, focusing on carbon sequestration as the primary benefit of implementing climate smart agriculture practices results in a missed opportunity when translated into climate policy. Farmers and ranchers provide additional, valuable ecosystem services to society for little to no compensation through voluntary stewardship practices. RIPE proposes that agricultural producers be fairly compensated at rates that reflect the combined values of climate, water quality, water conservation, flood mitigation, air quality, and other ecosystem services.

Current climate policy focuses exclusively on carbon and relies on cost-share principles that are leaving farmers and ranchers at an economic loss due to input costs and regulatory requirements. By shifting away from the cost-share principle to a profit-creation principle, RIPE enables a coalition of agricultural trade associations and environmental groups to jointly influence rural and urban policymakers for a policy that benefits all stakeholders' core needs.

RIPE is a farmer-led bipartisan dialogue aiming to create common sense climate policy that allows farmers to earn a fair profit for investing in voluntary stewardship practices that deliver natural resource benefits. RIPE proposes payments in the range of \$100/acre for cover crops and conservation tillage, reflecting their stacked ecosystem service values.

It is our hope that FFAR will continue prioritizing agriculture-climate partnerships, expand the focus beyond carbon, and help further incentivize farmers and ranchers for the work they are already doing.