

To: North Carolina Candidates for Public Office  
From: David Kelly, Senior Manager, EDF Action  
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Subject: Financing Resilient Agriculture in North Carolina

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Farmers in North Carolina are currently facing the most difficult agricultural economy since the 1980s, suffering from low commodity prices and a changing climate. Over the past few years, back to back hurricanes have resulted in billions of dollars of losses to the state's agricultural economy. North Carolina farmers are also suffering from increasingly variable weather conditions – from droughts to excessive rainfall events – that damage their crops and threaten their livelihoods.

These impacts require dedicated attention from state candidates who, once elected, can implement solutions to build a more resilient agricultural economy that protects farmers from variable economic and weather conditions. North Carolina voters are ready for bold new solutions to protect North Carolina's top economic driver and the communities that depend on it.

Fortunately, many agricultural conservation practices offer multiple economic and environmental benefits, including increased resilience to variable weather, improved water quality, and reduced long-term farm management costs. But any farm management transition involves some cost and risk, and existing federal and state agricultural conservation programs are over-subscribed. In addition to supporting funding for existing programs, North Carolina needs new funding sources to support our farmers in building a resilient future.

A recent [report](#) by Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) highlights innovative state-led efforts to finance agricultural conservation. We hope this report will inform your conversations with voters and other decision-makers so that North Carolina leaders can turn these ideas into sound policy to build a more resilient agricultural economy.

The report finds that innovative approaches to financing agricultural conservation can generate benefits for farmers, communities, and taxpayers. Some innovative agricultural conservation financing policy options include:

- Revolving loan funds
- Crop insurance incentives
- Transferable tax credits
- Environmental double dividends

You can learn more about the benefits of agricultural conservation and innovative financing programs from this [one-page summary](#) or by viewing the [full report](#). To be connected with a local expert on North Carolina agriculture and conservation financing, please reach out to David Kelly at [dkelly@edfaction.org](mailto:dkelly@edfaction.org).

**About EDF**

Environmental Defense Fund's mission is to preserve the natural systems on which all life depends. Guided in work by sound science and economics, EDF seeks lasting solutions to the most pressing environmental problems. EDF has been putting theory into practice for more than three decades in North Carolina, with a proven track record of developing and advocating for systemic solutions that harness market forces to reduce pollution, improve air and water quality, and restore landscapes to promote a safer, healthier, and more resilient future.

**About EDF Action**

EDF Action is the advocacy partner of Environmental Defense Fund. With a dedicated team of lobbyists, political strategists and communications professionals, EDF Action builds strong, bipartisan support for transformative environmental protections.

Sincerely,

David Kelly  
Senior Manager, EDF Action