118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. ______

To expand opportunity for agricultural producers, increase consumer choice in food markets, and enhance American international competitiveness by establishing new programs for food innovation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. McGovern introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on ________________________

A BILL

To expand opportunity for agricultural producers, increase consumer choice in food markets, and enhance American international competitiveness by establishing new programs for food innovation, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) Short Title.—This Act may be cited as the “Peas, Legumes, and Nuts Today Act” or the “PLANT Act”.
(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definition of covered commodity.
Sec. 3. Marketing loans.
Sec. 4. Market access program.
Sec. 5. Operating loans.
Sec. 6. Guaranteed operating loans.
Sec. 7. Loans to private business enterprises.
Sec. 8. Rural business development grants.
Sec. 9. Rural cooperative development grants.
Sec. 10. Appropriate technology transfer for rural areas program.
Sec. 11. Rural innovation stronger economy grant program.
Sec. 12. Plant-based protein input research program.
Sec. 13. Pulse crop health initiative.
Sec. 14. Value-added producer grants.
Sec. 15. Emerging protein production research, education, and extension initiative.
Sec. 16. Plant-based food innovation initiatives.

3 SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF COVERED COMMODITY.

Section 1111 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9011) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6)(A), by striking “and peanuts” and inserting “peanuts, and mushrooms.”;

and

(2) in paragraph (19)—

(A) in subparagraph (E), by striking “$2.40” and inserting “$3.00”;  

(B) in subparagraph (K), by striking “$11.00” and inserting “$13.75”;

(C) in subparagraph (L), by striking “$19.97” and inserting “$24.93”;

(D) in subparagraph (M), by striking “$19.04” and inserting “$23.80”;
(E) in subparagraph (N), by striking “$21.54” and inserting “$26.93”; and

(F) by adding at the end the following:

“(P) For mushrooms, $1.16 per pound.”.

**SEC. 3. MARKETING LOANS.**

Section 1202(b) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9032(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “$2.00” and inserting “$3.00”;

(2) in paragraph (12), by striking “$6.15” and inserting “$7.65”; 

(3) in paragraph (13), by striking “$13.00” and inserting “$16.25”; 

(4) in paragraph (14), by striking “$10.00” and inserting “$12.50”; 

(5) in paragraph (15), by striking “$14.00” and inserting “$17.50”; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

“(21) In the case of mushrooms, $1.16 per pound.”.

**SEC. 4. MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM.**

Section 203(b) of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5623(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting “and plant protein products (as defined in section 223 of the
Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994)” before “) through cost-share assistance”;

and

(2) in paragraph (8), by inserting “, including
entities involved in the development or promotion of
plant protein products (as defined in section 223 of
the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act
of 1994)” after “entities”.

SEC. 5. OPERATING LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 312(a) of the Consoli-
dated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C.
1942(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9)(B)(ii), by striking “or” at
the end:

(2) in paragraph (10), by striking the period
and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding the following:

“(11) supporting projects that facilitate the de-
development of plant protein products and connect
rural markets and economies.”.

(b) PLANT PROTEIN PRODUCT DEFINED.—Section
343(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1991(a)) is amended by
adding at the end the following:

“(14) PLANT PROTEIN PRODUCT.—The term
plant protein product’ has the meaning given the
term in section 223 of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994.”.

**SEC. 6. GUARANTEED OPERATING LOANS.**

Section 312(b) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1942(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (8), by striking “or” at the end:

(2) in paragraph (9), by striking the period and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding the following:

“(10) supporting projects that facilitate the development of plant protein products and connect rural markets and economies.”.

**SEC. 7. LOANS TO PRIVATE BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.**

Section 310B(a)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following:

“(E) facilitating economic opportunity for plant protein products, as well as relevant sup-

...
ply chains and processing capacity for plant protein products.”.

SEC. 8. RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.

Section 310B(c)(3)(A) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)(3)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (iv), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (v), by striking “or” and inserting “and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(vi) projects that support the development of business enterprises related to plant protein products; or”.

SEC. 9. RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.

Section 310B(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(14) GRANTS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CERTAIN PLANT PROTEIN CROPS.—The Secretary may make grants under this section to nonprofit institutions to support the development of pulse crops, vegetables, legumes, and fungi, including fava beans, mushrooms, oats, and the pulse crop industry, including by—
“(A) developing and disseminating science-based tools and information, technical and marketing assistance, job training and development;

“(B) developing new and innovative technologies to improve and utilize pulse crops as an ingredient in food products; and

“(C) providing technical and nontechnical assistance and education to food companies using pulse crops, and value-added production processes.”.

SEC. 10. APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR RURAL AREAS PROGRAM.

Section 310B(i)(2)(D) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(i)(2)(D)) is amended by inserting “or plant protein products” after “commodities”.

SEC. 11. RURAL INNOVATION STRONGER ECONOMY GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 379I of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008w) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

“(6) GRANT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PLANT-BASED FOODS.—At least 1 grant awarded under
paragraph (1) shall be for the purposes of supporting the development of plant protein products.”;

(2) in subsection (d)(1)(B)(vi), by inserting “, including the development of new plant protein products” before the semicolon; and

(3) in subsection (j), by striking “$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023” and inserting “$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028”.

SEC. 12. PLANT-BASED PROTEIN INPUT RESEARCH PROGRAM.

Section 1672(d) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(21) PLANT-BASED PROTEIN INPUT RESEARCH PROGRAM.—Research and extension grants may be made under this section for the purpose of carrying out or enhancing research to improve the functionality, flavor, and nutritional value of the use of soybeans, wheat, mushrooms, oats, sorghum, almonds, and other crops for the plant protein industry.”.
SEC. 13. PULSE CROP HEALTH INITIATIVE.

Section 1672(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (E)(ii), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) sharing technical and non-technical assistance to plant protein producers.”; and

(2) in paragraph (5), by inserting after “$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2023” the following: “$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2029”.

SEC. 14. VALUE-ADDED PRODUCER GRANTS.

Section 210A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1627c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a))” and inserting “section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a))”;
(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “has the meaning given the term in section 231(a) of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 1632a(a))” and inserting “means any farm in which the majority of the business is owned by an operator and any individuals related to the operator by blood, marriage, or adoption, including relatives who do not live in the household of the operator. The term includes any farm organized as a sole proprietorship, partnership, or family corporation. The term does not include any farm organized as a non-family corporation or cooperative, or any farm with a hired manager”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(14) INDEPENDENT PRODUCER.—The term ‘independent producer’ means an operator—

“(A) of a small or medium-sized farm or ranch that is structured as a family farm; and

“(B) who produces and owns more than 20 percent of the agricultural commodity to which value will be added as the subject of a project proposed under subsection (d).”;

(2) in subsection (d)(5)—
(A) in subparagraph (A), by adding at the end the following: “In doing so, the Secretary shall not exclude any producer that does not own and produce from at least 50 percent of their own agricultural commodity, or require any producer to have been in production for a minimum number of years to be eligible for participation.”;

(B) in subparagraph (B)(i), by striking “(as determined by the Secretary)”; and

(C) in subparagraph (C)(i)(III), by inserting “and whose net income does not exceed $1,000,000 or 125 percent of the county median income, whichever is greater” before the semicolon;

(3) in subsection (f)(1)—

(A) by striking “or” at the end of subparagraph (A);

(B) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (B) and inserting “; or”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following: “(C) operate small or medium-sized family farms.”; and

(4) in subsection (i)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—
SEC. 15. EMERGING PROTEIN PRODUCTION RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION INITIATIVE.

Subtitle A of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6911 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 223. OFFICE OF PLANT-BASED FOODS AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTION.

“(a) Office.—
“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish in the Department an Office of Plant-Based Foods and Innovative Production.

“(2) DIRECTOR.—The Secretary shall appoint a senior official to serve as the Director of the Office of Plant-Based Foods and Innovative Production (referred to in this section as the ‘Director’).

“(3) MISSION.—The mission of the Office of Plant-Based Foods and Innovative Production shall be to encourage and promote plant-based protein and plant-based food options and plant protein products, including the edible proteins made from plants (such as vegetables, beans, and legumes), fungi, or other nonanimal sources, through any of the following:

“(A) The development, construction, or acquisition of land, buildings, plants, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, facility construction, expansion, or production capacity expansions.

“(B) Providing technical and nontechnical assistance to plant-based food suppliers and processors in product development.
“(C) Supporting other innovations in plant-based protein and food products, as determined by the Secretary.

“(4) Responsibilities.—The Director shall be responsible for engaging in activities to carry out the mission described in paragraph (3), including by—

“(A) managing programs and providing assistance to plant-based companies and industry;

“(B) advising the Secretary with respect to the promotion of plant protein products;

“(C) coordinating with the agencies and officials of the Department to update relevant programs;

“(D) engaging in stakeholder relations and developing external partnerships;

“(E) identifying common State and municipal best practices for navigating local policies;

“(F) coordinating networks of existing stakeholder organizations; and

“(G) collaborating with heads of other Federal agencies, including the Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

“(b) Emerging Protein and Innovative Production Advisory Committee.—
“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
after the date of enactment of this section, the Sec-
retary shall establish an Emerging Protein and In-
novative Production Advisory Committee (referred to
in this subsection as the ‘Committee’) to advise the
Secretary on—

“(A) the development of policies and out-
reach relating to protein-rich foods sourced
from plant ingredients and emerging agricul-
tural production practices; and

“(B) any other aspects of the implementa-
tion of this section.

“(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall
be composed of 12 members, of whom—

“(i) 4 shall be individuals who are ag-
gricultural producers, of whom—

“(I) 2 individuals shall be agri-
cultural producers located in a rural
area; and

“(II) 2 individuals shall be farm-
ers that use innovative technology;

“(ii) 2 shall be representatives from
an institution of higher education or exten-
sion program;
“(iii) 1 shall be an individual who represents a nonprofit organization, which may include a public health, environmental, or community organization;

“(iv) 1 shall be an individual who represents business and economic development, which may include a business development entity, a chamber of commerce, a city government, or a planning organization;

“(v) 1 shall be an individual with supply chain experience, which may include a food aggregator, wholesale food distributor, food hub, or an individual who has direct-to-consumer market experience;

“(vi) 1 shall be an individual from a financing entity; and

“(vii) 2 shall be individuals with related experience or expertise in research focused on protein-rich foods sourced from plants and in products sourced from plants as determined by the Secretary.

“(B) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.—The Secretary shall appoint the members of the Com-
mittee not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section.

“(3) Period of Appointment; Vacancies.—

“(A) In General.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a member of the Committee shall be appointed for a term of 3 years.

“(B) Initial Appointments.—Of the members first appointed to the Committee—

“(i) 4 of the members, as determined by the Secretary, shall be appointed for a term of 3 years;

“(ii) 4 of the members, as determined by the Secretary, shall be appointed for a term of 2 years; and

“(iii) 4 of the members, as determined by the Secretary, shall be appointed for a term of 1 year.

“(C) Vacancies.—Any vacancy in the Committee—

“(i) shall not affect the powers of the Committee; and

“(ii) shall be filled as soon as practicable in the same manner as the original appointment.
“(D) CONSECUTIVE TERMS.—An initial appointee of the Committee may serve an additional consecutive term if the member is re-appointed by the Secretary.

“(4) MEETINGS.—

“(A) FREQUENCY.—The Committee shall meet not fewer than 3 times per year.

“(B) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the members are appointed under paragraph (2)(B), the Committee shall hold the first meeting of the Committee.

“(5) DUTIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall—

“(i) develop recommendations and advise the Director on policies, initiatives, and outreach administered by the Office of Emerging Protein and Innovative Production;

“(ii) evaluate and review ongoing research and extension activities relating to protein-rich products sourced from plants and the development of other plant-based foods;
“(iii) identify new and existing barriers to successful plant protein product development and emerging agricultural practices employed by plant protein producers; and

“(iv) provide additional assistance and advice to the Director as appropriate.

“(B) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Committee is established, and every 2 years through 2028, the Committee shall submit to the Secretary, the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report describing the recommendations developed under subparagraph (A).

“(6) PERSONNEL MATTERS.—

“(A) COMPENSATION.—A member of the Committee shall serve without compensation.

“(B) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Committee shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

“(7) TERMINATION.—
“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Committee shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date on which the members are appointed under paragraph (2)(B).

“(B) EXTENSIONS.—Before the date on which the Committee terminates, the Secretary may renew the Committee for 1 or more 2-year periods.

“(c) GRANTS.—The Director shall award competitive grants to support the development of plant-based foods and related innovative production to any of the following eligible entities:

“(1) A nonprofit organization.

“(2) A unit of local government.

“(3) A Tribal government.

“(4) Any school that serves any of grades kindergarten through grade 12.

“(5) A for-profit organization with fewer than 500 employees.

“(6) An institution of higher education, including a land-grant college or university and a nonland-grant college of agriculture (as those terms are defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural

“(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘plant protein product’ means a protein product made from a plant (such as a vegetable, bean, or legume), fungi, or other nonanimal source of protein.

“(2) The term ‘plant protein producer’ means a producer of a plant protein product or any processed or manufactured product thereof.

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section and the amendments made by this section $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028.”.

SEC. 16. PLANT-BASED FOOD INNOVATION INITIATIVES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall select not fewer than 5 eligible entities to host regionally-located plant-based food product and business innovation initiatives for the purposes of—

(1) diversifying product markets to reduce risk and developing higher-value use for such products;

(2) promoting business development that diversifies the income of producers of plant-based food
products through processing and market innovation;
and

(3) encouraging the production and use of
plant-based food products and domestic ingredients
for such products.

(b) ENTITIES ELIGIBLE TO HOST INITIATIVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), an
entity is eligible to host an initiative under sub-
section (a) if such entity is a State department of
agriculture or other State entity, a nonprofit organi-
zation, or an institution of higher education (as de-
fined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that has—

(A) a capacity to provide consultation and
expertise necessary to advance the purpose and
activities of the proposed initiative; and

(B) expertise in grant distribution and
tracking.

(2) INELIGIBLE ENTITY.—Notwithstanding
paragraph (1), an animal protein checkoff program
shall not be eligible to host an initiative under sub-
section (a).

(3) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity seeking to
host an initiative under subsection (a) shall submit
to the Secretary an application in such time, in such
manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may specify.

(c) Consultation.—An entity that hosts an initiative shall consult with the Secretary, and the Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service in carrying out the initiative.

(d) Partners.—

(1) In general.—An entity eligible to host an initiative under subsection (a) may, for purposes of hosting such initiative, partner with an organization or entity with expertise or experience in proteins, including the marketing, research, education, or promotion of plant-based food products.

(2) Timing.—A partnership established pursuant to paragraph (1) may be established—

(A) prior to the submission of the application under subsection (d); or

(B) after approval of the application, in consultation with the Secretary.

(e) Activities of Initiatives.—

(1) Assistance to Producers of Plant-Based Food Products.—

(A) Direct Assistance.—An initiative established under subsection (a) shall provide directly to producers of plant-based food prod-
ucts assistance through private consultation or widely available distribution. Such assistance may be provided—

(i) by the entity that hosts the initiative under subsection (d)(1);

(ii) through contracting with industry experts;

(iii) through the provision of technical assistance, such as informational websites, webinars, conferences, trainings, plant tours, and field days;

(iv) through research institutions; or

(v) through workforce development programs.

(B) GRANTS.—An initiative may provide a grant on a noncompetitive basis to an entity that receives assistance under subparagraph (A) to advance the business activities recommended as a result of that assistance.

(2) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance provided by an initiative established under subsection (a) may include—

(A) business consulting, including business plan development for plant-based food products,
strategic planning assistance, and distribution
and supply chain innovation;

(B) marketing and branding assistance, in-
cluding market messaging, packaging innova-
tion, consumer assessments, innovation in
emerging market opportunities, and evaluation
of regional, national, and international markets;

(C) assistance in product innovation, in-
cluding the development of value-added prod-
ucts, innovation in byproduct reprocessing and
use maximization, and product production
training, including in new, rare, or innovative
techniques; and

(D) other assistance, as determined by the
Secretary.

(3) GRANTS TO PLANT-BASED FOOD PRODUCT
BUSINESSES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An initiative shall pro-
vide grants on a competitive basis to new and
existing producers of plant-based food products
developing plant-based food products for the
purpose of—

(i) modernization, specialization, and

transition of equipment and facilities;
(ii) value chain and commodity innovation and facility and process updates for plant-based proteins producers;

(iii) product development, packaging, and marketing of protein products; and

(iv) transitioning from a livestock or dairy-based production to a plant-based food product-based production.

(B) GRANT AMOUNTS.—Grants provided under this paragraph shall not exceed $500,000, unless a greater amount is approved by the Secretary.

(4) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—The Secretary shall establish guidelines and procedures to prevent any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest by an initiative (including a partner of the initiative) with respect to providing funding under paragraph (1) or (3). An initiative shall agree, as a condition on the receipt of funds under this section, to comply with such guidelines and procedures.

(5) PRIORITY.—In providing direct assistance under paragraph (1) and grants under paragraph (3), an initiative shall give priority to—

(A) producers of plant-based food products with limited access to other forms of assistance;
(B) employee-owned businesses;

(C) minority-owned and other businesses owned by members of historically disadvantaged communities;

(D) cooperatives;

(E) producers of plant-based food products that add substantial value in processing or marketing, such as whole-cut products and specialty products; and

(F) institutions of higher education that primarily serve minorities.

(6) REQUIREMENT.—A foreign person making a direct investment (as those terms are defined in section 801.2 of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations)) in the United States is not eligible to receive direct assistance under subsection (f)(1) or a grant under subsection (f)(3).

(f) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

(1) Multiyear funding allocations.—In distributing funds made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall seek to make awards in multiyear funding allocations.
(2) USE OF FUNDS.—Not less than 50 percent of the funds made available under subsection (i) shall be allocated to grants under subsection (f)(3).

(g) REPORT.—Not later than January 31, 2027, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the outcomes of the initiatives under this section; and

(2) any related activities and opportunities that the Secretary may pursue to further increase protein innovation.

(h) ANIMAL PROTEIN CHECKOFF PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term “animal protein checkoff program” means a commodity promotion program under a commodity promotion law (as defined in section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7401)) with respect to commodities consisting of, or produced using animal proteins.

(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2028.