

HR 4327

Converting Our Waste Sustainably (COWS) Act of 2023

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Agriculture and Food

Introduced: Jun 23, 2023

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry. (Aug 21, 2023)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/4327>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Costa, Jim [D-CA-21]

Party: Democratic • **State:** CA • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (14 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]	D · ME		Jun 23, 2023
Rep. Valadao, David G. [R-CA-22]	R · CA		Jun 23, 2023
Rep. Harder, Josh [D-CA-9]	D · CA		Aug 8, 2023
Rep. Panetta, Jimmy [D-CA-19]	D · CA		Aug 8, 2023
Rep. Fitzpatrick, Brian K. [R-PA-1]	R · PA		Aug 18, 2023
Rep. Lawler, Michael [R-NY-17]	R · NY		Aug 18, 2023
Rep. Crockett, Jasmine [D-TX-30]	D · TX		Sep 18, 2023
Rep. Kuster, Ann M. [D-NH-2]	D · NH		Oct 3, 2023
Rep. Krishnamoorthi, Raja [D-IL-8]	D · IL		Oct 26, 2023
Rep. Schrier, Kim [D-WA-8]	D · WA		Jan 29, 2024
Rep. Duarte, John S. [R-CA-13]	R · CA		Feb 9, 2024
Rep. Vasquez, Gabe [D-NM-2]	D · NM		Apr 18, 2024
Rep. Bonamici, Suzanne [D-OR-1]	D · OR		Jun 11, 2024
Rep. Molinaro, Marcus J. [R-NY-19]	R · NY		Aug 30, 2024

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Agriculture Committee	House	Referred to	Aug 21, 2023

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Agriculture and Food

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
118 S 2479	Related bill	Jul 25, 2023: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S3525-3526)

Summary (as of Jun 23, 2023)

Converting Our Waste Sustainably (COWS) Act of 2023

This bill establishes an alternative manure management program for eligible dairy and livestock producers and provides specified funds to the program for FY2024 through FY2028.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) must establish an alternative manure management program to award producers contracts to support carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Producers must implement management measures that include adopting

- pasture-based management;
- alternative manure treatment and storage practices;
- a solid separation system (or installing a new, higher efficiency solid separation system); or
- scrape technologies, including vacuum technologies.

The federal cost share may not exceed 90%. Further, the bill caps the maximum payment to a person or legal entity in any five-year period at \$825,000.

USDA must prioritize contracts to entities that address public health concerns (e.g., air quality and water quality) associated with dairy and livestock operations located near low-income or underserved communities. Further, USDA must ensure geographical diversity when awarding contracts.

USDA must also reserve a majority of the program's funds for beginning, limited resource, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as farmers and ranchers that continue to transition towards enhanced methods of sequestering carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions.

The bill also includes composting practices as eligible projects under USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program.

Finally, USDA must review practice standards for composting facilities and soil carbon amendments (e.g., compost) and develop and implement a new conservation practice standard for the on-farm production of compost.

Actions Timeline

- **Aug 21, 2023:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Conservation, Research, and Biotechnology.
- **Aug 21, 2023:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry.
- **Jun 23, 2023:** Introduced in House
- **Jun 23, 2023:** Referred to the House Committee on Agriculture.