

Viewpoint: Investing in agricultural technology is key to addressing climate change

Agricultural research and development may not be as flashy as other climate policy proposals, such as the establishment of a clean electricity standard or the Civilian Climate Corps, but it has a proven environmental track record, clear economic co-benefits and wide appeal. Agricultural innovations have shrunk agriculture's environmental footprint by [enabling farmers](#) to produce more food on [less land](#), with fewer inputs and greenhouse gas emissions. Since the 1960s, innovation-driven productivity advances have enabled farmers to reduce land use [by 9 percent](#) and cut the carbon footprint per pound of milk and chicken [by over 50 percent](#).

Unfortunately for the climate (and for agricultural producers, who benefit from productivity-enhancing and input-saving innovations), total public spending on agricultural research and development has stagnated, and much of our nation's agricultural research infrastructure is in disrepair.

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Given the magnitude of the climate crisis, Congress should invest in a wide range of mitigation strategies, including embracing and expanding public agricultural research — which has reliably delivered environmental benefits for decades — and the infrastructure agricultural researchers depend on.

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