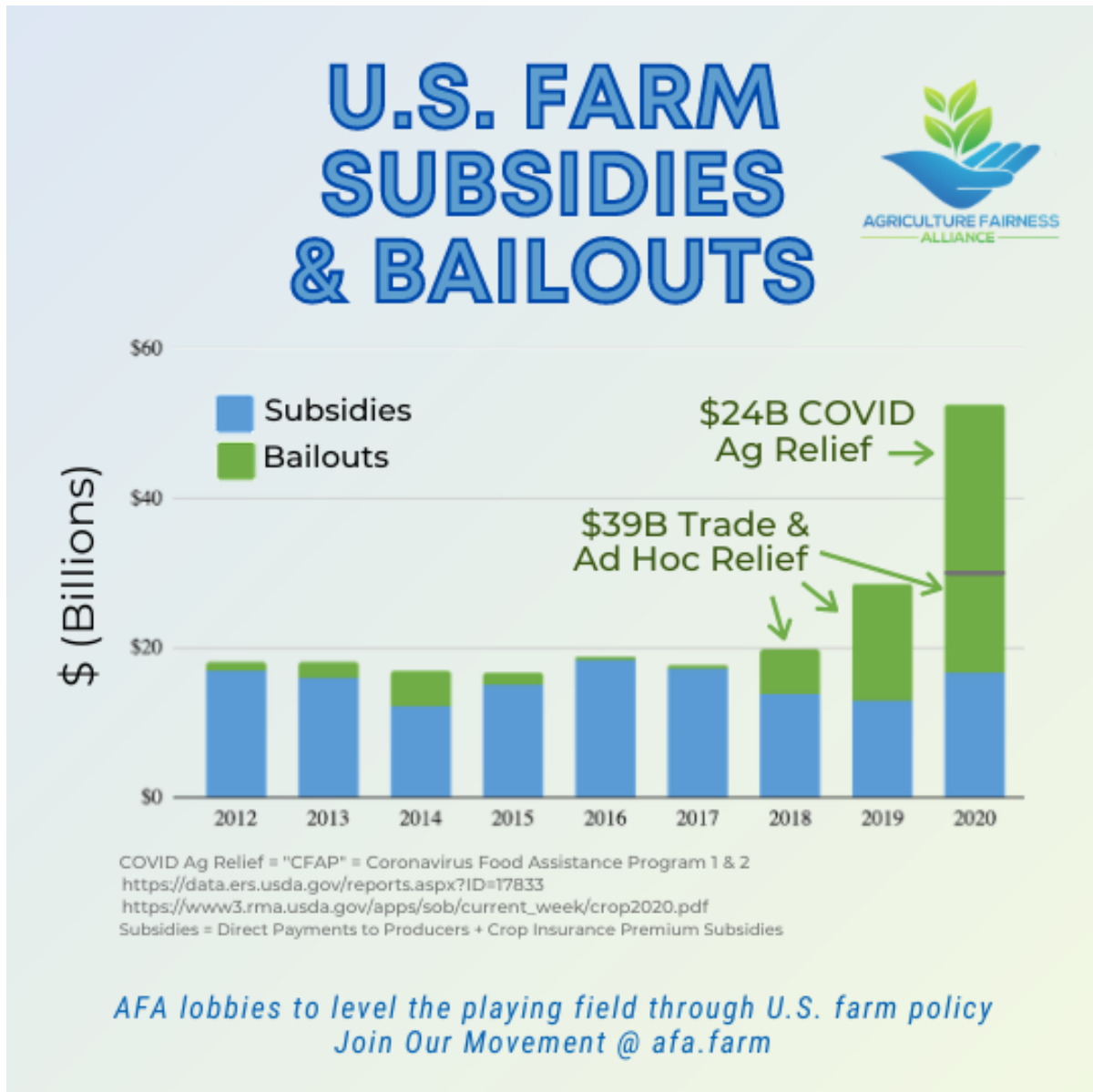


## U.S. 2020 Farm Subsidy Breakdown

From [AFA Agriculture Fairness Alliance](#)

April 2021

2020 was a blowout year for U.S. farm subsidies. Between the trade wars and COVID relief, bailouts soared. [[USDA ERS 'Government payments by program'](#) ]



In the U.S., subsidies to the agriculture sector typically run around \$20 billion per year. In 2020, bailouts rocketed that number to over \$50 billion.

**What exactly is a subsidy, and what exactly are bailouts?**

A **subsidy** is a financial benefit from a government that **gives advantage** to a specific industry or business. Funded by **your tax dollars**.

- World Trade Org

Example: \$300 million in 2019 to U.S. dairy farmers via the Dairy Margin Coverage program



A **bailout** is the injection of money into a business or organization that would otherwise face **imminent collapse**. Funded by **your tax dollars**.

- Investopedia

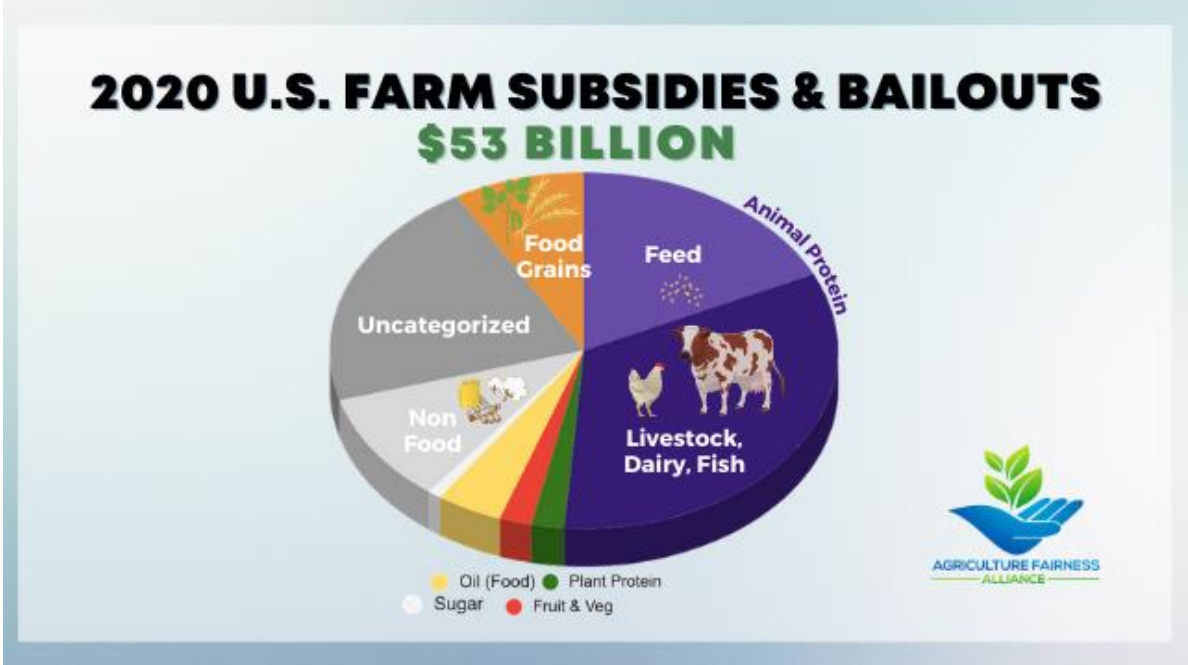
Example: \$24 billion in 2020 to U.S. ag producers via the Coronavirus Food Assistance Programs

*AFA lobbies to level the playing field in U.S. farm policy  
Join Our Movement @ [afa.farm](http://afa.farm)*

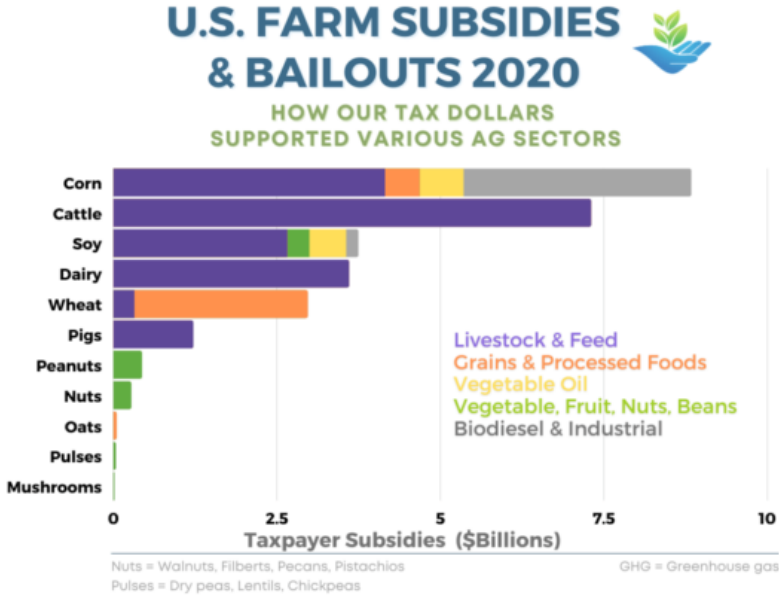


At AFA, we want to know how our tax dollars are being used to incentivize farmers. We wonder whether federal policy is being spent wisely. Is it favoring sustainable and healthy food production, or, are our tax dollars being misspent propping up unhealthy and environmentally damaging sectors?

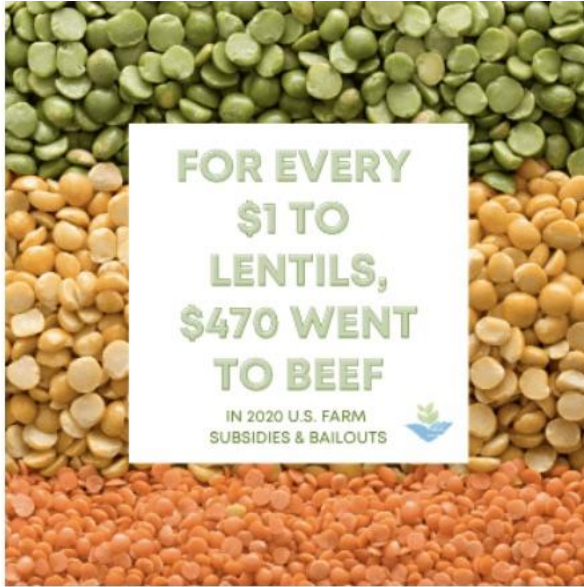
To answer that question, we analyzed how much money went to each category of agricultural products. Here's the breakdown.



Looking further into the data ...



*2020 Farm Policy Encouraged Livestock Production*



[afa.farm/beef](https://afa.farm/beef)



[afa.farm/pork](https://afa.farm/pork)



[afa.farm/dairy](https://afa.farm/dairy)

### **2020 Ag Payments failed to address the American Fiber Crisis**

According to the American Heart Association, 95% of Americans are failing to consume adequate fiber on a daily basis. Yet more than half of subsidies benefited producers of foods that contain zero fiber. [Read more.](#)

### **2020 Farm Subsidies failed to address the Global Climate Crisis**

Livestock, dairy and animal feed producers received the most subsidies and bailouts. These foods release outsized greenhouse gases, require a lot of land, and provide only a small portion of our nutritional needs. Furthermore, eating too much of these foods leads to health problems.

AFA is lobbying to level the playing field in farm policy. We think public policy should help farmers transition to producing climate-smart crops. Furthermore, we think USDA should direct subsidies and bailouts to ensure the nation is producing foods the same agency, USDA, recommends we eat.

The current situation has room for improvement. We wonder,

**What if ...**



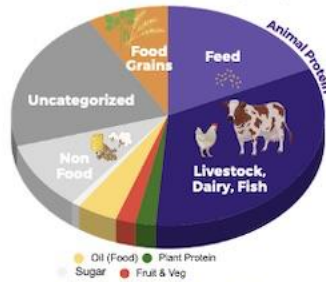
# 2020 FARM SUBSIDIES & BAILOUTS FAVORED MEAT, MILK, AND ANIMAL FEED PRODUCTION

**USDA My Plate: 80-100% plant foods**



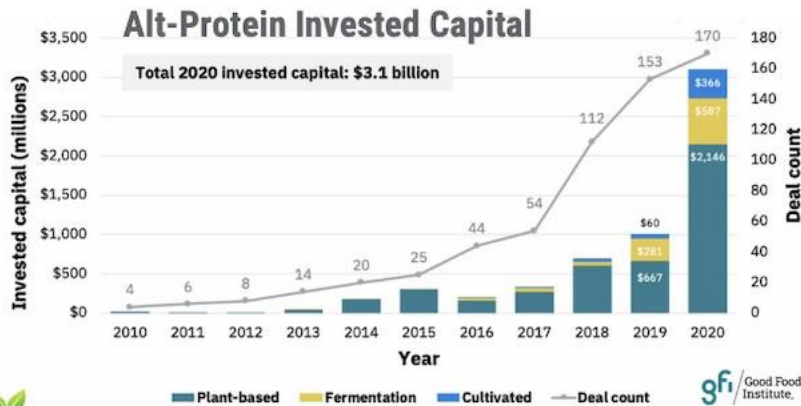
USDA My Plate  
(Dairy includes Fortified Soy Products)

**\$53 Billion in Farm Subsidies & Bailouts (2020)**



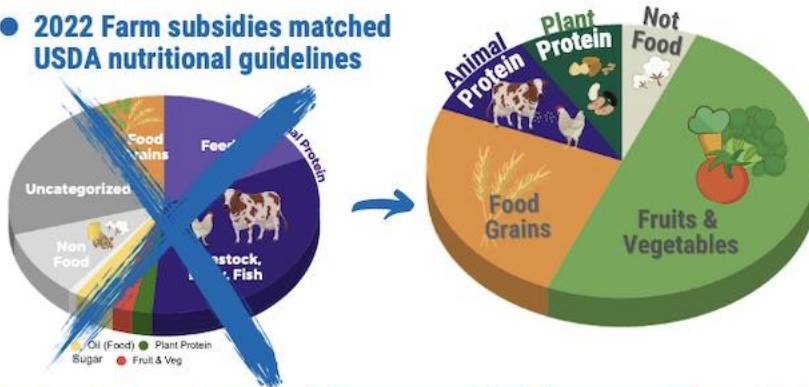
**At least half of farm subsidies went to meat, milk, & animal feed production**

## MEANWHILE, THE ALT-PROTEIN MARKET GREW



# what if... 2022 FEDERAL FARM SUBSIDIES LEVELED THE PLAYING FIELD?

- 2022 Farm subsidies matched USDA nutritional guidelines



- Transition programs were available for farmers & ranchers

As a dairy farmer, I would rather get funding to transition to something better than get funding to keep producing milk for a market that **already has a surplus**. I would feel better knowing I'm producing something in high demand that's also benefiting the environment.

- Daniel Eng, Wisconsin Dairy Farmer

- Grants were available for alt-protein development

