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Bipartisan Group of Legislators Seeks Information on Benefits of Crop Insurance for Mushroom Growers *Legislation Signals Growing Recognition of Mushrooms*

Avondale, PA, June 7, 2023—A set of bipartisan legislators in both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate introduced the [Protecting Mushroom Farmers Act](#) today, which would require the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct a study on the benefits of providing crop insurance for mushroom farmers, American Mushroom (AMI) announced today.

Representatives Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA) and Dan Meuser (R-PA), along with Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and John Fetterman (D-PA) introduced the legislation which would direct USDA to analyze various threats to mushroom production and the impact on farmers' ability to grow mushrooms and maintain profitability.

Mushrooms are unique in a variety of ways. Too perishable to import or export overseas, fresh mushrooms are a true national commodity. Additionally, the biome of cultivated mushrooms and the ecosystem used to grow them is unlike any other specialty crop. Mushroom growers use upwards of 30 other agricultural byproducts to grow and harvest mushrooms and experience viral threats vulnerable only to fungi.

At the same time, mushrooms are quickly becoming problem solvers in health, sustainability, and other areas. Loaded with vitamins and nutrients, mushrooms are key to a healthy diet, and their sustainable properties make them attractive to a variety of industries for a host of uses.

Recognizing the growing significance of mushrooms in our diet and beyond, in a [statement](#), Reps. Houlahan and Meuser identified the need to protect mushroom businesses and ensure these businesses have the protection they need to continue to contribute so much to our food systems and agricultural economy. Both represent districts in Pennsylvania; Rep. Houlahan represents Chester County and parts of Berks county, both of which account for nearly two-thirds of all U.S. mushroom production. In the same statement, Senators Fetterman and Casey identified the need for specialty crops like mushrooms to be on a level playing field like other food commodities.

To further explain the plight of U.S. mushroom growers, third generation mushroom farmer and AMI member Chris Alonzo, Pietro Industries, is testifying before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Food and Nutrition, Specialty Crops, Organics, and Research in support of this bipartisan effort. See his written statement [here](#).

“The mushroom industry is incredibly grateful to members of Congress for their focus on the challenges of the mushroom industry,” AMI President Rachel Roberts, said, and cautioned that “Crop insurance is not a silver bullet to ensuring continued success of this uniquely American commodity that is grown all year long.

“Mushroom growers, like other ag sectors, are in constant need of labor. We have supported the Farm Workforce Modernization Act in both the Trump and Biden Administrations, and urge Congress to further come together to develop common-sense immigration solutions to help our nation’s agriculture community, and the mushroom industry, thrive,” said Roberts.

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About American Mushroom

American Mushroom, headquartered in Avondale, Pennsylvania, is a national voluntary trade association representing the growers, processors, and marketers of cultivated mushrooms in the United States and industry suppliers worldwide. For more information, visit www.americanmushroom.org.