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**OPINION**

# IUCULANO: Latest Deregulation Bill Risks Gifting China Our Meat Production

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Confronting China and protecting American industries from China's globalist ambitions involved opposing legislation that strengthens China's grip on our economic interests. This is why I'm raising a red flag on the risks associated with the [so-called Ending Agricultural Trade Suppression \(EATS\) Act](#), H.R. 4417/S. 2019, led by Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA) and Sen. Roger Marshall (R-KS).

Due to the opposition they've already faced since its introduction, they must know their proposal is grotesquely offensive to American farmers, states' rights advocates, and experts on the China threat. In short, EATS would ban states from setting agricultural procurement policies that support their farmers and communities and clean the slate of existing state laws, enabling foreign companies to more rapidly acquire American agriculture assets.

There is still the risk, however, that a [carveout](#) for the pork industry could be snuck into the Farm Bill in order to help the "largest pork producers." However, the largest pork producer in the U.S. is Smithfield, a Chinese-owned corporation operating on American soil. China's CCP regularly interferes in Chinese corporations, thanks to the country's fusion of the civilian, military, and political sectors, as seen with ByteDance and TikTok. Smithfield is 100% owned by a Chinese corporation, something that has [worried lawmakers](#) due to CCP influence.

If Congress passes any version of the EATS Act in the Farm Bill later this year, Rep. Hinson and Sen. Marshall will – whether they realize it or not – create a massive advantage for China's goal of controlling more American agriculture at the expense of American family farmers and ranchers. Doing this will create a regulatory void that exposes American farmers and ranchers to the unchecked expansion of foreign corporations, particularly those from China or Chinese-owned. The misguided effort represents a dangerous erosion of American sovereignty and economic independence.

By being given a free pass to bypass state laws, China will further dominate the pork sector, compromising our food production systems, supply chains, and even our national security.

How does this play out? Let's compare two pork companies operating in the US: [China-owned Smithfield](#) and then Pennsylvania-based Clemens Food Group.

China/Smithfield is on record opposing state legislation—and even supporting lawsuits to reverse laws on the books that set minimum standards for pork production. This is to be expected considering Chinese pork companies are constructing monstrous [26 story-pig farm skyscrapers](#) in China, where they're able to operate in a rules-free environment. The EATS Act threatens to bring China's rules-free environment into our country.

In contrast, Pennsylvania's Clemens Food Group on the other hand, is American-owned. They have operations throughout rural Pennsylvania, as well as Michigan and Ohio, and they've already transitioned their farms to meet state food safety and husbandry laws. They're even proudly marketing their products as held to the highest standards. They clearly see these American farmer-friendly laws as a market advantage against Chinese competition, and they oppose this Chinese race-to-the-bottom.

Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA), the Chair of the House Agriculture Committee, is leading the drafting of the 2023 House Farm Bill alongside Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark., the Ranking Member in the Upper Chamber. I know there are numerous issues that they'll be balancing as they lead their do this work. On this most dangerous potential addition to the bill, I hope Thompson and Boozman choose America over China and reject any potential EATS Act pork carveout. (Previously rejected iterations of the EATS Act were also roundly opposed by Republicans and Democrats alike causing earlier Farm Bills to almost sink).

To protect our agricultural heritage, our food security, and our success over foreign adversaries, we must reject the EATS Act and any pork spinoff that comes from it. No Farm Bill passing at all in the 118th Congress would be a better outcome for conservative values and America's farming communities than a Farm Bill passing with the EATS Act or a similar pork carveout in it.

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