

U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to encourage you to maximize the purchase of agricultural commodities as you consider how to support America's farmers and ranchers during the pandemic emergency caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The agricultural economy was already in a fragile state from several years of adverse weather conditions and our challenging trade situation. Despite being an essential service, our ag producers and their supply chain partners are facing the total loss of some market segments and the inability to quickly change their marketing and processing capabilities to meet the new realities.

Farmers and ranchers are all frustrated with the inability to get their dairy, meat, and poultry products as well as fresh fruits and vegetables into the hands of consumers, especially those consumers most in need of food assistance.

I trust that you will use all of the tools at your disposal, including the funding provided to the Office of the Secretary in the CARES Act and under the authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) as well as Section 32 funds, to help lessen the impact that the coronavirus is having on our food production and supply system.

The pictures and video of milk being dumped and fresh vegetables being plowed into the ground is unsettling to most Americans, but it is heart breaking for those farm families that produced that commodity.

I look forward to working with you should you need further legislative tools to help ensure that the production that no longer has a foodservice market can be made available to help our nation's foodbanks.

Thank for you for the many hours that you and your staff are spending to document the devastating impact that the coronavirus has had on our ag economy. We look forward to the delivery of the assistance that was provided in the CARES Act and through the other tools at your disposal.

Sincerely,



Collin C. Peterson  
Chairman