



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

April 23, 2020

The Honorable Ron Tusler  
Wisconsin State Assembly  
Post Office Box 8952  
Madison, Wisconsin 53708

Dear Mr. Tusler:

Thank you for your letter of April 14, 2020, requesting that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) include the dairy industry in the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The program will provide critical support to our farmers, maintain the integrity of our food supply chain, and ensure every American continues to receive and have access to the food they need during this national crisis. Your comments and recommendations are appreciated.

Rest assured that we at USDA are continuously working to support our customers and partners. We recognize these are uncertain times for all Americans and share your concerns about the effects of COVID-19 on the dairy industry. USDA is taking the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously, actively monitoring the situation as it evolves, and will take appropriate steps to respond and protect the food supply chain to the extent Congress has authorized.

Using the funding and authorities provided in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, and utilizing USDA's existing authorities, CFAP will use direct payments, commodity purchases, and food distribution to provide certainty to farmers and consumers. CFAP will provide direct support based on actual losses for agriculture producers where prices and market supply chains have been significantly impacted and will assist producers with additional adjustment and marketing costs resulting from lost demand and short-term oversupply for the 2020 marketing year caused by COVID-19.

Also, USDA will partner with regional and local distributors to purchase and distribute up to \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy, and meat products. USDA estimates purchases of \$100 million per month in fresh fruits and vegetables, \$100 million per month in a variety of dairy products, and \$100 million per month in meat products. The commodities will be delivered to food banks and community and religious non-profits serving Americans in need.

We will be quickly implementing the programs above. That said, I stand ready to work with you to implement solutions as appropriate that will help ensure the health and safety of American agriculture. Please visit <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus> for additional resources.

The Honorable Ron Tusler  
Page 2

Thank you for your continued support of our farmers and ranchers. Please share this letter with your cosignatories.

Sincerely,



Sonny Perdue  
Secretary

cc:

Senator Andre Jacque  
Representative Gary Tauchen  
Senator Devin Lemahieu  
Representative Gae Magnafici  
Senator Daniel Feyen  
Representative Jesse James  
Senator Kathy Bernier  
Representative Timothy Ramthun  
Representative Robert Brooks  
Representative Dave Murphy  
Representative Melissa Sargent  
Representative James Edming  
Representative Rick Gundrum  
Representative Warren Petryk  
Representative Loren Oldenburg  
Representative Dave Considine  
Representative Mark Spreitzer  
Representative Travis Tranel  
Representative Bob Kulp  
Representative Debra Kolste