

CORONAVIRUS FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



ISSUE:

The COVID-19 global pandemic forced the widespread shutdown of virtually every societal gathering. This shutdown, coupled with the disruption in the food supply chain nationwide, resulted in the collapse of markets for fresh fruits and vegetables. Livestock prices tanked. Dairies were forced to dump milk from their tanks. While these are highlights, no sector of agriculture was left untouched. In response, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$23.5B in new funding to provide relief to growers nationwide. Subsequently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a plan to employ \$19B in assistance by June 2020.

IMPACT:

The USDA's assistance program called Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) has two primary methods of distributing funds to aid the agriculture sector, including:

- Direct payments to affected growers totaling \$16B, including \$9.6B to livestock (\$5.1B to cattle, \$2.9B to dairy), \$3.9B to row crops, \$2.1B for specialty crops, and \$500M to other crops.
- Producers will be compensated up to 85% of their price loss during the January 1 – April 15 period and up to 30% through the next two quarters.
- Purchase and distribution of \$3B in fresh produce, dairy, and meat USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service will administer this program, which will purchase \$100M in each category per month.

ACTION:

While Florida Farm Bureau greatly welcomes the actions taken by Congress and USDA, concerns remain on timing and appropriate funding levels to ensure Florida agriculture in its entirety will have access to relief funds. Furthermore, FFBF staff is actively engaged with congressional offices as they consider a fourth relief package aimed at recovery.



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\$16 BILLION
IN DIRECT PAYMENTS TO
AFFECTED PRODUCERS

\$3 BILLION
IN FOOD PURCHASES OF MEAT,
DAIRY & PRODUCE

\$125K
PAYMENT LIMITATION PER
COMMODITY

\$250K
PAYMENT LIMITATION
PER ENTITY

FFBF POLICY:

We recommend that when a disaster program is initiated, guidelines for program integrity should be implemented. Any disaster program should be designed to take into account timeliness and not be discriminatory to diversified operations. Disaster payments should be exempted from payment limitations.

Florida Farm Bureau (FFB) is the state's largest general agriculture membership organization, with 145,000 member-families. Florida Farm Bureau's Agricultural Policy Department facilitates the policy development process initiated by its active membership and ratified annually by the organization's voting delegates. FFB National Affairs works to advance policies through Florida's congressional delegation and federal regulatory agencies.

