



**MISSOURI FARM BUREAU FEDERATION**

P.O. Box 658, 701 South Country Club Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65102 / (573) 893-1400

July 30, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Missouri farmers and ranchers appreciate your ongoing efforts to mitigate financial strife created by uncertainty surrounding international trade. We realize there will always be challenges when dealing with other nations and know the Trump Administration is sincere in its efforts to improve current trade agreements. The proposed Market Facilitation Program (MFP) will provide welcome financial assistance to farmers who seem to be the focus of retaliation by our trading partners.

Shortly after the trade adjustment package was announced, I drove across the northernmost counties in Missouri. Most of the corn in these counties will yield less than one third of normal yields. Corn yields will not respond to rain at this point. Soybeans are showing extreme moisture stress and are within days of a total crop loss. If the MFP is based on this year's yields, it will provide no help at all to the victims of this isolated but severe drought.

According to last week's drought report, Missouri is experiencing a severe drought that is affecting over 30% of our state's land mass and more than 4 million people. Crop yields in the northern and southwestern parts of the state will be far below average. Livestock farmers are facing a shortage of hay and dwindling water supplies. Some farmers have resorted to chopping their corn for silage due to anticipated low yields.

Farmers typically spread marketing of a single year's crop over at least three years, selling some of planned production before planting, some during the growing season, and some in the year following harvest. If Missouri farmers suffering from drought don't receive some consideration for the extreme conditions this year, they will have lost market returns for that portion of the 2017 crop that wasn't priced before retaliatory tariffs were in place, and also have market losses for that portion of the 2019 crop that they would typically be pricing right now.

We certainly understand the reasons for basing a temporary program on yields of the crop year most directly affected by a short term market disruption, but hope the program will take into account those who are suffering from weather stress this summer, perhaps using an average yield for those areas affected by extreme drought.

The drought, coupled with the decline we are experiencing in the overall farm economy, is taking its toll on Missouri farmers. We are very concerned about the pending situation and seek your assistance in tailoring the MFP to account for areas suffering from drought conditions.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring a safety net for farmers and ranchers during this time of uncertainty. My staff and I are ready and willing to assist should additional information be required.

Sincerely,

Blake Hurst  
President

cc: Undersecretary Bill Northey, Administrator Richard Fordyce, Undersecretary Greg Ibach, Chief Economist Dr. Robert Johansson, Senator Roy Blunt, Senator Claire McCaskill, Congressman Lacy Clay, Congresswoman Ann Wagner, Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer, Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II, Congressman Sam Graves, Congressman Billy Long, Congressman Jason Smith