

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 1, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We write today to request that the Department of Agriculture (USDA) work to provide additional assistance to producers in California to compensate for losses due to retaliatory trade measures. While we are pleased that over half of the \$12 billion in assistance has been announced and sign-up for assistance begun, the majority of this aid was targeted for large commodities such as soybeans, corn, and cotton. We respectfully ask that the second round of assistance include support for California farmers commensurate with the damage inflicted by retaliatory tariffs.

California relies on export markets for many agricultural goods, including many specialty crops that are grown almost exclusively in our state. These same goods now face steep tariffs, and farmers are facing severe losses. While we are encouraged that progress has been made on reaching a trade deal with Mexico and Canada, the updated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) does nothing to address the ongoing retaliatory tariffs imposed on U.S. agricultural goods by those countries.

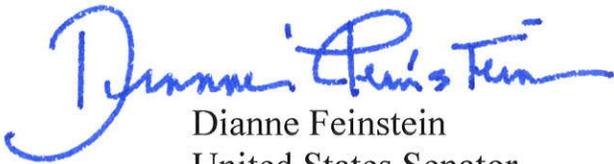
In July, we wrote to you asking for details as to the \$12 billion in agricultural assistance to compensate for the retaliatory tariffs imposed by some of our trading partners. In that letter, we also requested that an adequate level of this funding be provided to California. We appreciate the response you provided to our last letter, and agree that “[k]eeping agricultural export markets open and achieving free and fair trade is clearly the best way to sustain America’s farm sector,” as you stated in your September 7th letter.

Unfortunately, the assistance provided by the Department does not make up for the drastic losses California farmers have faced due to tariffs imposed by China, Mexico, Canada, and the European Union. For instance, a recent University of California, Davis study estimated the total loss to pistachios due to trade actions

as \$384 million, but the USDA has so far only announced \$85.2 million in pistachio purchases as part of the trade assistance.

Please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss this matter further. We look forward to working with you to ensure that California farmers receive all needed assistance to recover from the current trade environment, and to expanding markets for U.S. agricultural products. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

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