



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

April 15, 2020

Mr. Benny Cox
President
American Sheep Industry Association
9785 Maroon Circle
Suite 360
Englewood, CO 80112

Dear Mr. Cox:

Thank you for your letter of March 27, 2020, asking the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to work with industry to develop a mechanism that would help offset both actual and demonstrated losses realized by America's sheep producers to help as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. 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 American sheep industry. The USDA is taking the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously. We are 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.

I appreciate you highlighting the struggles that the American sheep industry are experiencing as it faces the COVID-19 outbreak. I will keep your comments in mind as we continue to assess how we can best help our hardworking farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers with the recently signed Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and other authorities and options to prevent, prepare, and respond to the impacts of COVID-19 while supporting our agricultural producers. USDA is also evaluating other authorities and options to prevent, prepare, and respond to the impacts of COVID-19 while supporting our agricultural producers.

I stand ready to work with you to develop solutions to ensure the health, safety, and prosperity of American agriculture as well as the timely delivery of services to maintain the movement of America's food supply from farm to fork. Please visit <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus> for additional resources. We encourage the partnership of stakeholders, farmers and ranchers in our continued effort to "Do Right and Feed Everyone."

Again, thank you for your letter and continued support of American agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary