

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

RE: Docket ID FSA-2020-0004

Dear Secretary Perdue,

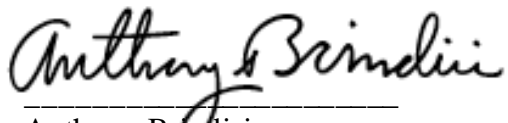
We write to express appreciation for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) leadership in efforts to sustain and promote U.S. agriculture production during the COVID-19 pandemic and to urgently request the inclusion of America's apple growers in the USDA's economic relief efforts.

We are proud to represent states with significant apple production. According to USDA data there are approximately 5,000 commercial apple growers in 32 states across the U.S. These producers are often the backbones of rural communities, producing about 250 million, 42-pound bushels of apples annually. Our apple farmers stimulate \$15 billion in total economic activity when including downstream storage, sorting, packing, shipping, marketing, exporting, and processing.

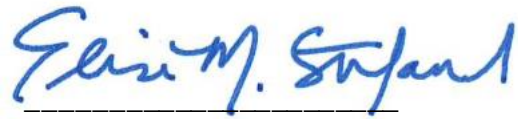
As with countless industries nationwide, the outbreak of COVID-19 has had a drastic and damaging effect on apple growers. Please find enclosed a formal Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) from the U.S. Apple Association and associated regional growing associations commenting on the USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The enclosed sales price data on 43.8 million bushels shows that during the covered time period, apple price losses ranged anywhere from 6.5% to as much as 24.9%. Further, shipping volumes in the study period declined 24 percent. This steep price decline clearly makes apple growers eligible for CFAP payments, based on the USDA's requirement of a 5 percent-or-greater price decline between mid-January and mid-April as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We urge you to use the funds Congress provided in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act* to help apple growers make it through this crisis so they may continue to provide American consumers with the number one most consumed fruit in the United States. Thank you for your full and fair consideration of our request, consistent with applicable statutes and regulations. We stand ready to assist in ensuring our nation's food supply remains secure during these uncertain times.

Sincerely,



Anthony Brindisi
Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress

Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress

Fred Upton
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

Scott Perry
Member of Congress

Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Member of Congress

Mike Simpson
Member of Congress

John Joyce, M.D.
Member of Congress

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress

John Katko
Member of Congress

Russ Fulcher
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

TJ Cox
Member of Congress

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

Denver Riggleman
Member of Congress