

Gov. Wolf Announces \$40 Million in CARES Act Funding Available to Address Dairy Industry Relief, Food Security

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Wolf announced today the availability of \$40 million in funding through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to support Pennsylvania’s dairy industry and food security programs, following months of uncertainty and loss from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Pennsylvania’s agricultural industry represents the very best of who we are – something that’s been seen since the very beginning of our COVID-19 mitigation efforts,” Gov. Wolf said. “That’s why it’s critical that we open these programs to support Pennsylvania’s farmers today. This CARES funding is going to an industry that gives back every day to ensure that Pennsylvanians have access to fresh food.”

“I’m extremely proud of our agricultural industry, which was hit with the most drastic market changes, yet they continued to show up for their communities,” said Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. “The industry understands that hunger should not be our next pandemic and took action. I’m grateful that the governor is ensuring that our farmers, and in particular our dairy farmers, receive much needed financial support.”

Specifically, \$15 million will provide an opportunity for dairy farmers to receive direct relief payments and \$5 million will reimburse dairy farmers who participate in the [Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System](#) (PASS) program by donating excess dairy product to the commonwealth’s charitable food system.

Any dairy farm that experienced financial losses due to discarded or displaced milk during the COVID-19 emergency disaster [may apply](#) for assistance. Each farm with a documented loss will receive a minimum of \$1,500 and an additional prorated share of the remaining funds, not to exceed the actual amount assessed by the handler. The deadline to apply for the Dairy Indemnity Program is September 30, 2020.

Also, \$15 million will go to the [State Food Purchase Program](#), which provides cash grants to counties for the purchase and distribution of food to low income individuals, and \$5 million will go to the PASS program to reimburse the agricultural industry for the costs involved in harvesting, processing, packaging and transporting food that they donate to the charitable food system. The PASS program helps to support Pennsylvania’s agriculture industry in all 67 counties and reduce waste of agricultural surplus by making connections between production agriculture and the non-profit sector.

Throughout the COVID-19 public health crisis, the Wolf Administration has [comprehensively addressed](#) food security across multiple agencies to ensure that all Pennsylvanians have access to food.

For information as it relates to agriculture during COVID-19 mitigation in Pennsylvania visit agriculture.pa.gov/COVID. For the most accurate, timely information related to Health in Pennsylvania, visit on.pa.gov/coronavirus.