

United States Senate

October 7, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
US Department of Agriculture
1280 Maryland Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

I write to you regarding the impact of excessive rainfall that has recently occurred in northeast Montana and has resulted in substantial quality loss in the region's crops. Over the past several weeks, northeast Montana has faced unusual and sustained high levels of precipitation and I urge you to utilize all appropriate resources and flexibility to provide relief and disaster assistance to impacted farmers in a prompt manner.

As you know, Montana farmers and the agriculture economy overall are facing significant challenges, whether it be low commodity prices, weather, or market access issues. This rainfall has occurred during harvest and has resulted in losses due to high yields yet very low quality which renders crop insurance ineffective and has dramatically reduced the value and market for their crop.

In particular, I urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow for farmers impacted by excessive moisture to be eligible to participate in the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) program and have the WHIP+ program account for price impacts due to severe quality loss from excessive moisture. I appreciate USDA's efforts to provide an effective and efficient safety net for farmers when natural disasters or severe weather strikes and I believe these weather events and resulting losses qualify.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other critical issues.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator