

AAM Senter On The Hill 5-20-20

I hope everyone and your families are safe and healthy. Normally, planting season is a time of hope with every producer hoping that this year is going to be better. Yet with lost markets and low prices, many are wondering how many farms will survive 2020. I am ready to cancel 2020, enough already! Plus, we are going to have to also survive a year of politics and the awful ads that come with it.

Many producers have been asking, what is going to be in the new Corona Relief package for USDA? The last two years we've been asking what's in the Trade Adjustment payments, who would have thought a Corona Relief program. Details are coming out now, so here's what I know, Producers will be able to start signing up May 26th at your local FSA office. I am not sure how these offices, that are severely understaffed and already with a high workload will be able to get it done. But these hardworking County Office employees are dedicated to taking care of their farmers.

The package is for wool, row crops including malting barley, canola, corn, cotton, millet, oats, soybeans, sorghum, sunflowers, durum wheat, hard red spring wheat will be payed based on price risk held on January 15th. Payment will be 50% of a producers 2019 total production or the 2019 inventory held January 15th, whichever is smaller. That amount will be multiplied by the payment rate for the crop, corn, 32 cents a bushel, soybeans 45 cents a bushel and cotton 9 cents a pound. One issue I see is crops missing from the list such as hard red winter wheat, why not just cover all wheat?

Cattle, lambs, yearlings, and hogs will be based on the number of livestock sold between January 15th and April 15th and multiplied by the payment rate. For dairy, there is two parts, the first is based on your 1st quarter production for 2020 multiplied by \$4.71 per hundred weight. The second part will be a national adjustment to each producer of the 1st quarter of 2020 production, multiplied by \$1.47.

Specialty crops such as fruit, nuts and vegetables based on what was shipped between January 15th and April 15th that was not payed for or the number of acres never harvested. Having this basic information will help those that will be applying, to gather the information that will be needed.

AAM is pleased and proud to support bipartisan legislation to be introduced by Senator Grassley, Senator Tester, Senator Tina Smith, Senator Joni Ernst, Senator Mike Rounds, Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, and Senator Daines. This legislation would require meatpackers to buy 50% of their weekly volume on the open or spot market. All the purchased cattle would have to be slaughtered within 14 days of purchase. This will certainly be a step in the right direction to begin to put competition back in the marketplace for cattlemen. AAM has opposed concentration of meat and poultry processing and now we see it has put the meat supply in jeopardy for consumers while big beef and pork processors make millions. By moving cattle and pork production off our farms into the feedlots and big pork factories, our producers and our consumers are paying the price. I read now where imports are increasing of steak and other meat products, this is not right as producers struggle with low prices. Who is making the money, the packers and importers, not US producers? I also see where beef and pork exports are up, this is while our store shelves are empty, we're not selling cattle and hogs, it's the packers and big beef and pork who's making off like bandits all the while USDA brags about the export numbers. We see what we are getting from our checkoff dollars, a coverup for them all in the name of selling more product. Country of Origin Labeling will help turn the tide too, because American consumers will demand US produced beef and pork.

I've been hearing from producers that need legal advice and cannot afford a lawyer. The Farmers Legal Action Group, FLAG is a great resource for legal advice. They have been doing great work since the 1980's for farmers, their Hotline number is 877-860-4349. That's it for now, stay in the fight,

David Senter AAM President

aamincpresident@gmail.com

aaminc.org