



August 10, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Climate change is underway, and it is undermining the livelihoods of American family farmers and global food security. While some extent of temperature rise and climate variability is now unavoidable, human actions have a significant impact on the severity of future climate disturbance. Federal policy heavily influences what kind of impact the country will have, and agriculture has an important role to play. Farming is unique among other sectors of the economy because it has the potential to not only reduce ongoing emissions, but also to reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses already present in the atmosphere.

To that end, we appreciate the many critical, laudable steps that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has undertaken to help family farmers and ranchers cope with changing weather conditions and participate in climate change mitigation. These include:

- The Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) efforts to engage producers on the benefits of enhancing soil health and climate resiliency;
- The regional Climate Hub's efforts to disperse location-specific information on changing weather conditions and what they mean for agriculture among producers;
- The innovative work of the Climate Change Program Office and Office of Environmental Markets, which establish opportunities for producers to receive value for environmental services, diversifying farm income, and ultimately reducing the need for regulation; and
- The many research endeavors that find new ways for producers to improve their margins while reducing greenhouse gasses, and to make their operations more resilient to climate interference, based on sound science and free of political interference.

We urge you to amplify USDA's commitment to these efforts, and to think creatively about more opportunities to connect with family farmers and ranchers on climate change.

While climate change can often be a tough issue to broach in many communities, there is little doubt that farmers and ranchers want to do the right thing and leave the land in a better state than they found it. USDA agencies, like the NRCS, are extremely effective at connecting with producers and landowners – regardless of their views on climate change – and encouraging

them to take action. Through heightened awareness, effective communication, and continual education, we can secure the best possible results for American agriculture and the global food system.

Thank you for your consideration. National Farmers Union (NFU) has been dedicated to working proactively with farmers on climate change for years and would welcome the opportunity to assist or collaborate with you on this critical work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roger" being more prominent than the last name "Johnson".

Roger Johnson  
President