

CORONAVIRUS

# Pork producers seek immediate COVID-relief action

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President Trump expressed disappointment regarding the ongoing stalemate in the development of new COVID-relief legislation, saying his lead negotiator "hasn't come home with the bacon." Without immediate relief for hog farmers in crisis, the treasury secretary may not be the only one not bringing home the bacon, according to the National Pork Producers Council.

"We've lost hog farmers of all sizes due to the COVID pandemic and need additional relief to preserve a highly competitive pork production system in the

United States," says NPPC President Howard A.V. Roth, a hog farmer from Wauzeka, Wis. "Without federal assistance, we will lose more hog farmers and see our farm sector consolidate, limiting consumer choice and reducing what have been record production levels in recent years."

U.S. hog farmers are facing \$5 billion in collective pandemic-related losses this year following two challenging years due to trade retaliation. NPPC is seeking the following provisions in a new COVID-relief package:

- Compensation for euthanized and donated hogs
- Additional funding for animal health surveillance and laboratories, which have appropriately assisted and shared resources with their public health partners
- Modification of the Commodity Credit Corp. charter so a pandemic-driven national emergency qualifies for funding
- Additional funds for direct payments to producers without restriction
- Extension of the Paycheck Protection Program with modifications to make it accessible to more producers

Roth adds, "We appreciate previous relief extended by the administration and Congress to pork producers and other farmers. Unfortunately, it has not stabilized our farm sector; we need immediate action to offset the severe impact of COVID on a key element of the rural economy."

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