

Please find below information from Commissioner Fried on federal assistance programs available for those in the agriculture industry:

With continued questions about federal assistance for the agriculture industry, we are providing this update on current aid programs and some of the ways we at FDACS are working for you during this difficult time.

Today, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has launched the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

- PPP loans are designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll and the SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.
- All agriculture businesses are eligible as long as size standards are met. To learn more and apply today, please visit: www.sba.gov/paycheckprotection.

We are continuing to work with Senator Marco Rubio's office to ask the SBA to temporarily allow the agriculture sector to apply for EIDL loans during this current crisis.

- Until this eligibility is clarified for farmers, ranchers, and nursery operations, only small aquaculture operations, small agriculture cooperatives, and agriculture-dependent entities, such as restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores, farmers markets, packinghouses, and distributors, are eligible for EIDL if size standards are met.

Following the passage of the CARES Act, which provided \$9.5 billion to directly support the agriculture industry impacted by COVID-19, I also [called on Secretary Perdue](#) to move swiftly on establishing USDA programs to get this much-needed assistance into the hands of farmers as well as to immediately exercise his agency's Section 32 purchasing authority to help Florida producers struggling to move perishable products due to the closure of many restaurants and other food service establishments.

We have welcomed the [updated guidance](#) from the Department of State expanding the scope of H-2A processing. I want to make sure you saw that the USDA heard our calls for crop insurance flexibilities, which you can learn more about [here](#).

We will be sure to pass along more information on USDA assistance as it becomes available. **In the meantime, we encourage all producers to keep track of all data pertaining to losses/disruptions during this time in anticipation of these programs.**

We at FDACS are fighting every day for Florida's agriculture industry and consumers, advocating for the support and policy changes needed during this challenging time. Please do not hesitate to reach out your regional director (contact information below) with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for all that you are doing,
Nikki Fried

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Please feel free to follow up with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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