

United States Senate

March 12, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of Agriculture. I appreciate your commitment to serving the American people and ensuring our farmers, ranchers, and agricultural communities have the support they need to thrive. Your leadership is critical as you work with President Trump to strengthen American agriculture, protect our land, ensure a resilient supply chain for healthy food for America and the world, and support communities impacted by natural disasters.

I am grateful for your work, and I write today asking that you take immediate action on key agricultural issues that impact our food security, economic stability, and national interests. Farmers across the country are facing serious challenges, from recovering after disasters to combatting foreign threats and devastating crop diseases. Addressing these challenges requires decisive action and a commitment to putting American agriculture first.

Florida plays a unique and vital role in America's agricultural landscape as a leading producer of specialty crops, including citrus, tomatoes, strawberries, and peppers. As the primary source of fresh fruits and vegetables for the Eastern United States during the winter months, Florida's agricultural industry is essential to maintaining a stable and reliable food supply. However, this industry faces increasing challenges from hurricanes, foreign competition, and devastating plant diseases like citrus greening. Supporting Florida's farmers is not just a regional concern – it is a national priority for food security.

To that end, I encourage your leadership on the following priorities:

Providing Disaster Aid Through Block Grants

- Ensure states have access to disaster aid in the form of block grants when requested, allowing for greater flexibility in addressing the specific needs of agricultural communities impacted by hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other disasters.
- Cut through bureaucratic red tape to get disaster relief funds into the hands of farmers and ranchers in a timely manner.

Protecting American Farmland from Foreign Influence

- Strengthen oversight of land purchases by foreign entities or individuals to prevent adversarial nations, especially Communist China, from gaining control over critical U.S. agricultural resources.
- Increase transparency in land ownership to ensure foreign acquisitions do not undermine American food security.

Ensuring an Efficient and Well-Staffed Farm Service Agency

- Address staffing shortages at the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to ensure farmers and ranchers receive timely support for loan programs, disaster assistance, and conservation efforts.
- Cut inefficiencies that delay services, modernize systems, and improve accessibility for agricultural communities.

Combating Citrus Greening Disease

- Continue research and development of innovative solutions to fight citrus greening disease, which continues to devastate the American citrus industry.
- Support growers with disease-resistant crop development, treatment advancements, and sustainable management strategies.

Standing up for U.S. Agriculture in International Trade

- Fight for U.S. specialty crops during the review of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA) by requiring accountability for Mexico, ending its dumping of produce into the U.S., cracking down on the cartels' gains from farm-takeovers that hurt American growers, and limiting the quantity of Mexican produce entering America.
- Review existing policies and trade agreements that disadvantage U.S. growers.
- Collaborate with interagency partners to improve food safety and transparency for imported goods.

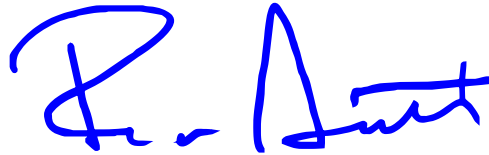
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These issues are critical to the future of American agriculture, and I urge you to take swift action to support our farmers, protect our land, and strengthen our food supply. I appreciate your attention to these matters and stand ready to assist in any way necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a prominent "S".

Rick Scott
United States Senator