



Dear Partner in Agriculture,

There are 1.8 million Pennsylvanians struggling with hunger every day, more than 500,000 of whom are children. Fruits and vegetables, protein from meat and eggs, and calcium from milk are all essential to living a healthy lifestyle that fosters learning and growth and Pennsylvania produces this food in abundance. In a commonwealth that boasts more than 57,000 farms and \$7.4 billion in agricultural products sold, we believe no one should be denied access to the healthy, nutritious food that we produce, especially children.

For this reason, *we are writing to urge your support for increasing the allocation for the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) to \$5 million.* While we are thankful for the current \$1 million allocation, it only covers a portion of the nutritious bounty that could be brought into the charitable food system through PASS to help nourish our neighbors in Pennsylvania struggling to put food on the table. These dollars are distributed using the State Food Purchase Program formula so that all 67 counties can receive a PASS allocation. With more dollars, the PASS program will support Pennsylvania agriculture while getting this nutritious food to Pennsylvania families in need.

PASS is an innovative program for accessing healthy and nutritious surplus food produced by Pennsylvania farmers to share these products with Pennsylvania families in need. Through PASS, the Department of Agriculture provides funding to cover the costs associated with harvesting, processing, packaging, and transporting surplus products including fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy, poultry, pork, beef, and grains (much-needed items at the food banks and their agencies) in order to donate those items to the charitable food system. Significant portions of the product obtained through PASS is food that is perfectly edible but might otherwise become waste. Our agricultural community views this as an important step in improved stewardship of our resources. In its first year of funding, PASS had a positive impact for Pennsylvania agricultural producers, local food sourcing, and Pennsylvanians in need.

Sincerely,

Chris Herr, Executive Director
PennAg Industries

Joel Rotz, Manager,
Government Affairs and Communications
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

David Smith, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Dairywomen's Association

Alan Novak, Executive Director
Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania



Hannah Smith-Brubaker, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable
Agriculture



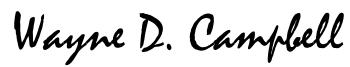
Heidi Secord, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Farmers Union



Nolan Masser, President
PA Cooperative Potato Growers



William Troxell, Executive Director
PA Vegetable Growers Association



Wayne D. Campbell, President
Pennsylvania State Grange