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Specialty Crop Leaders Renew Call for Additional Dedicated Aid for the Sector

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 2026 — Specialty crop leaders issued the following statement in response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [announcement](#) providing bridge payments for specialty crops and sugar totaling up to \$1 billion as part of the Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers (ASCF) Program.

“We are still reviewing the details of today’s announcement and will be reaching out to USDA for additional clarity.

President Donald J. Trump’s widely successful CFAP-2 program provided essential aid to family farms during his first term, and [as we wrote](#) to the President on Oct. 6, 2025, CFAP-2 should be the model for providing economic aid to America’s specialty crop producers. That approach also has broad bipartisan support in Congress. It was recently endorsed by more than 100 bipartisan Members of Congress [in a letter](#) to the leaders of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate Agriculture Committees on Dec. 18, 2025, and it has been included in bills introduced this year by both Chairman G.T. Thompson and Ranking Member Angie Craig.

The hard truth is that even with today’s announcement more help is needed, which is why we continue to urge Congress to provide not less than \$5 billion in dedicated aid for the specialty crop sector. This support is critical to the continued sustainability of American agriculture and the communities specialty crop producers serve.”

The SCFBA is co-chaired by Cathy Burns, CEO of the International Fresh Produce Association; Mike Joyner, President of the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association; Dave Puglia, President and CEO of Western Growers; and Kam Quarles, CEO of the National Potato Council.

SCFBA

The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance is a national coalition of more than 150 organizations representing growers of fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, nursery plants and other products. The Alliance was established to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop agriculture and improve the health of Americans by broadening the scope of U.S. agricultural public policy. For more information, visit farmbillalliance.com.