

Congress of the United States

July 9, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We write in support of USDA purchases of California almonds and encourage utilizing all purchasing authorities, including Section 32 and the Food Purchase and Distribution Program, to provide much-needed support to California's almond industry.

Prior to COVID-19 the almond industry was still recovering from the effects of retaliatory tariffs imposed by China and India. We appreciate your previous support for the industry, through purchases and the Market Facilitation Program, and hope your support will continue through this pandemic.

Since the onset of COVID-19 almond raw bulk market prices have drastically declined and the industry anticipates a 36% reduction in farm gate value, according to the Almond Alliance of California. Almonds are a top three commodity in our state creating approximately 104,000 jobs and usually contributing more than \$11 billion to the state's total economy.

The effects of COVID-19 are not only felt throughout the global market, but more notably in the homes of our constituents. According to Feeding America, California food banks have seen a 73% increase in demand, and it is anticipated that demand for nutrition assistance programs will remain high in the coming years. Therefore, the need for nutritious shelf stable food is incredibly important for families across the nation. Almonds provide an excellent option for food banks and households alike. Having up to a three-year shelf life and being an excellent source of protein, almonds are a healthy daily snack for all ages.

We thank you for your continued support during this unpredictable time and urge you to give all due consideration to California's almond industry's purchase request.

Sincerely,



JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress



MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress



JIMMY PANETTA
Member of Congress



DOUG LAMALFA
Member of Congress



TJ COX
Member of Congress



JOSH HARDER
Member of Congress



SALUD CARBAJAL
Member of Congress



JERRY MCNERNEY
Member of Congress



JIM COSTA
Member of Congress



AMI BERA, M.D.
Member of Congress



DEVIN NUNES
Member of Congress