

## DATCP Interim Secretary Applauds Gov. Evers' Action to Fund COVID-19 Response

*\$65 million from federal CARES Act allocated to agriculture, food insecurity efforts*

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MADISON – Randy Romanski, Interim Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) today applauded Gov. Tony Evers' action to invest \$65 million to help Wisconsin's agricultural and food insecurity sectors respond to the challenges presented by COVID-19. The funding is part of the money allocated to Wisconsin through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

"This funding will help support the diverse farms across the state as they recover from these difficult circumstances," said Romanski. "It will also help connect the dots between our food producers and people in need."

The Wisconsin Farm Support Program provides \$50 million for direct aid payments to farmers. Producers who are eligible will apply through the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, which is working closely with DATCP. Farmers could see payments as early as June.

In addition to direct aid, the Governor's commitment also includes a \$15 million Food Security Initiative. A portion of the funding will go toward helping food banks, pantries, and other nonprofit organizations adapt to the challenges they've faced as a result of COVID-19. This initiative will also help these entities purchase, process, and store Wisconsin agricultural products for distribution to local families and consumers who are experiencing food insecurity.

"Governor Evers has consistently identified the essential nature of agriculture to Wisconsin's economy and well-being," Romanski added. "We're proud to be a part of the productive discussions to connect Wisconsin's agriculture and food insecurity communities."

Both parts of the \$65 million program will prioritize the use of Wisconsin products and local partnerships wherever possible.

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