



**AMERICAN AGRICULTURE.  
STRONGER TOGETHER.**

## **Specialty Crop Growers Need Immediate Economic Assistance**

**America's Specialty Crop Growers need an aid package of not less than \$5 billion from Congress.**

**Any aid package for agriculture should set aside not less than 1/3 of those funds for Specialty Crop Producers.**

### Background

*The family farms across the United States that produce the safe nutritious fruits, vegetables, and tree nuts, as well as a wide variety of nursery crops and horticulture, need additional economic assistance.*

*They are confronted with a host of unprecedented economic challenges from rising labor and other input costs to lost markets and unfair competition from foreign competitors.*

*Specialty crop operations annually contribute more than \$75 billion in cash receipts towards the U.S. economy and account for more than one-third of all crop sales.*

*Yet out of the recently announced \$12 billion Farmer Bridge Program only \$1 billion has been reserved for specialty crops as well as all other crops not included in the original list of 13 program commodities.*

*USDA offers a variety of programs to help farmers, ranchers, communities, and businesses that have been hard hit by natural disaster events and other economic challenges. USDA and Congress have adjusted and refined how economic aid is delivered to specialty crop producers. The following are key elements that should be carried forward to any aid package for specialty crop growers, and the farm bill should establish these elements as the default program design for providing direct payments to specialty crop producers.*

- *Payment limitations of not less than \$900,000.*
- *Exempt growers from AGI limitation if at least 75 percent of their income is derived from farming activities (i.e., the OBBBA version).*
- *Payments calculated based on a grower's individual aggregate specialty crop receipts – e.g., sales or revenue.*
- *Allow growers to select the base year for calculating their payments from a predetermined selection of not less than three years.*
- *Require minimal paperwork and permit growers to self-attest under penalty of perjury (subject to potential future audit).*
- *No double-dipping. Some growers who participate in row crop programs can also qualify for specialty crop programs. They should not be allowed to participate in two similar programs. (For example, it appears that some growers participated in both ECAP and MASC.)*