

United States Senate

September 25, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Secretary Perdue:


I write today to express concern about conditions affecting wheat growers in Northeast Montana.

In some parts of Northeast Montana, producers received as much as 150 percent of normal rainfall this spring. The extreme precipitation boosted yield, and many Montana farmers cut a high yield crop this harvest. At the same time, the prolonged moisture cut down the quality of the grain. As a result, Montana producers are now sitting on high volumes of potentially unsellable grain.

You recently announced that the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) will provide assistance for counties with qualifying disaster declarations, as well as counties that may have been impacted by the qualified disaster. I ask that you clarify that WHIP+ includes value and quality losses, and thus are eligible for assistance. For wheat growers, value and quality losses are as devastating as yield losses, and WHIP+ should reflect that.

I urge you to look into this issue and find a workable solution for Montana's grain growers. Please do not hesitate to follow up with me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester