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United States Senate

January 25, 2021

Steve Peterson
Acting Administrator
Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Acting Administrator Peterson:

I am reaching out today regarding the Quality Loss Adjustment (QLA) program, and the hurdles Montana producers are facing as they apply. I am disappointed that after more than a year of waiting, grain growers are still unable to access QLA support despite very clear Congressional intent.

In 2019, Eastern Montana producers experienced significant challenges with extreme weather. Excessive rain and snow impacted grain quality, and many were forced to sell their product as feed. When existing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) disaster relief programs lacked the funding and scope to support farmers during this crisis, Congress passed the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020*, increasing disaster resources and statutory authority to better serve these producers.

After more than a year of waiting, Montanans were initially thrilled to hear that QLA would provide much-needed support for impacted growers. That is why it is exceptionally disappointing to hear that QLA does not provide adequate support for producers that sold grain as feed. Under existing QLA guidelines, producers must submit quality discount settlement documentation, which is not often issued for feed wheat. Without documentation, this means that the producers who need QLA the most are unable to make full use of this program. It is absolutely unacceptable that on the way out the door, the Trump Administration created program rules that do not actually work for folks on the ground. I urge you to correct this error, and right a wrong for Eastern Montana grain growers.

The application deadline for QLA closes on March 5, 2021, which is why I ask for your prompt attention to this issue. I look forward to working with you to ensure that USDA programs work for Montanans.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester

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