



Durbin Discusses Impact Of COVID-19 With Illinois Agriculture Leaders

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SPRINGFIELD – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, today discussed the COVID-19 pandemic’s effect on Illinois agriculture with leaders from Illinois agricultural groups. During the call, Durbin heard concerns about the need for immediate and direct financial assistance for family farm and livestock operations, the importance of maintaining stability in both agricultural markets and the food supply chain, and recommendations for additional policy changes that can help agriculture producers during the pandemic.

Durbin has [pressed](#) the Small Business Administration (SBA) to allow farms and agricultural businesses suffering economic injury due to COVID-19 be acknowledged as eligible for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. He has also [urged](#) the SBA to prioritize the needs of farms and small businesses in underserved and rural markets when processing and disbursing loans under the Paycheck Protection Program established in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*. The *CARES Act* also included \$23 billion for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance for crops, livestock, dairy, and other farm products.

“The past few years has been a challenging time on Illinois farms. Now, with the suddenness of the COVID-19 pandemic, our farmers are facing even more serious economic consequences as consumer demand has dramatically shifted, crop and livestock prices have dropped, and supply chains face disruptions. I promised stakeholders on today’s call that I would continue to push the Administration to do everything it can to provide immediate financial relief for family operations and protect the health and safety of workers that support our food system,” Durbin said.

Joining Durbin on today’s call included the Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Soybean Association, Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois Pork Producers, Renewable Fuels Association, Grain and Feed Association of Illinois, and the Illinois Beef Association.

