



**Iowa
Cattlemen's
Association**

August 25, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

On February 24, 2021, the Iowa congressional delegation sent a bicameral letter requesting relief for custom cattle feeders who have experienced significant revenue loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The unexplained inequity highlighted by the letter persists. Swine and poultry contract growers are eligible for CFAP 2, while custom cattle feeders remain excluded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Custom feeding is an important part of Iowa's cattle industry. Custom cattle feeders provide services including: yardage, feed, health services, marketing, and more for livestock that are owned by someone else. In Iowa, nearly all custom feedyards are owned and operated by farm families. Many of these custom cattle feeders have been unable to conduct business as usual due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with yards sitting empty or at low capacity. As a result, custom cattle feeders are losing revenue and Iowans are suffering. Simply put, the plight of custom cattle feeders in Iowa is very similar to those in the swine and poultry sectors.

To assist custom cattle feeders during this difficult time, we request that USDA include custom cattle feeders as part of any upcoming assistance plans. (Grassley, Ernst, Axne, Feenstra, Hinson, & Miller-Meeks, 2021)

This week, USDA announced an update regarding signup for CFAP 2 applications. While the deadline to apply for CFAP 2 or modify existing aid applications has been extended, we are disheartened as custom cattle feeders have yet to receive any form of assistance from USDA.

The Iowa Cattlemen's Association reaffirms the request to include custom cattle feeders as part of any upcoming assistance plans. A timely response on this matter is appreciated. Questions or comments related to this letter may be directed to Cora Fox, Director of Government Relations, at (515) 296-2266 or at cora@iacattlemen.org.

Respectfully,

Richard Godfrey
President, Iowa Cattlemen's Association