

United States Senate

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February 14, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Perdue,

I write to you today to ask for your continued support of the American floriculture industry. Today—Valentine’s Day—is the number one holiday for florists and floral purchases, representing 30% of all transactions for the year. In 2019, 28% of American adults purchased flowers or plants as gifts for Valentine’s Day, according to the IPSOS Floral Tracking Study. This year, the National Retail Federation estimates \$2.3 billion will be spent on Valentine’s Day floral products, meaning lots of romantic gifts, but also important job-creating revenue for U.S. floral producers, wholesalers, and retailers in both urban and rural areas.

In 2018, floriculture and nursery products accounted for \$14.5 billion in wholesale value. In my home state of Connecticut, over 1,700 nurseries collectively gross more than \$800 million annually for the farming, sale, and maintenance of fresh flowers and plants. Across the state, garden centers, landscapers, perennial growers, and landscape designers employ 30,000 people¹. These businesses are an important part of our state’s agricultural economy and it is vital that the federal government continue to support this sector.

There are numerous ways USDA can continue to support the American floriculture industry, such as featuring American flowers at government events, launching public relations campaigns, and reaching out to growers and businesses to hear directly from them about the challenges they face. I also urge you to support full funding for the Floriculture Crops Report and the Floriculture and Nursery Research Initiative. Please continue your efforts to support American-grown products. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

¹ CT Nursery & Landscape Association. (n.d.). About Us. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from <https://www.cnla.biz/about/>