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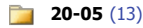
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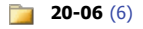
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## Adams Introduces the Local and Regional Farmer and Market Support Act

Alma Adams Press [sam.spencer@mail.house.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 3:28 PM

To: Steve Johnston



### Rep. Adams Introduces the *Local and Regional Farmer and Market Support Act*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – New legislation introduced by **House Committee on Agriculture Vice Chair Alma Adams (NC-12)** would help save the farmers, farms, and families hardest hit by COVID-19. The ***Local and Regional Farmer and Market Support Act (Local Farmer Act)***, introduced this week in Congress, would address concerns about these farmers by targeting aid directly to local and regional food producers and markets as they cope with the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

[A copy of the bill is available here.](#)

"Small and mid-sized farms, and especially those operated by Black, Indigenous and other farmers of color, have been among those hardest hit by COVID-19," **said Vice Chair Adams.** "Many of these growers depend on direct marketing sales at farmers markets or to local schools and restaurants and have seen their revenue decline dramatically because of the pandemic."

"These losses are unsustainable for small growers and they urgently need help. We must take action now to implement thoughtful, inclusive policies to help save these farmers and the local and regional food economies that support them."

"I'm proud to introduce the ***Local and Regional Farmer and Market Support Act***, which would target pandemic aid directly to local and regional producers and markets, with specific support built-in for farmers of color and minority-owned markets, to help them weather the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic," **concluded Adams.**

#### The Local Farmer Act would:

- Create an alternative coronavirus relief payment program for farmers that sell in local and regional markets based on their historic revenue, rather than price loss;
- Provide emergency response grants for farmers markets and local food enterprises to implement public health protections and coronavirus-smart marketing practices;
- Provide emergency response grants to direct marketing farmers

to help them respond to shifting markets and adopt new socially-distant practices and sales models;

- Support racial equity by prioritizing assistance to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) farmers and minority-owned farmers markets and food enterprises; and
- Provide robust outreach and technical assistance to BIPOC farmers and ranchers.

[A link to a summary of the bill is available here.](#)

“I support this initiative to help our farmers and farmers markets, including small and minority farmers, especially as we have seen an increasing consumer interest in locally sourced foods,” **said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler.** “Local markets are essential food sources in many communities and are important sales venue for farmers. This bill would help ensure they can remain open and operate within COVID-19 guidelines and recommendations.”

“The small farms that provide our communities healthy food at farmers markets, independent restaurants, and schools are the backbone of our local food economies,” **said Roland McReynolds, Executive Director of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association.** “The Local Farmer Act will help these farmers and ranchers stay in business and continue to nourish us all through this crisis.”

According to **Carolina Farm Stewardship’s Survey**, over seventy-five percent of small farms in the Carolinas have seen their revenue decline due to COVID-19, including more than one-third whose sales dropped more than \$1,000 per week.

“The viability of black owned farms and cooperatives depends largely on direct marketing in local and regional farmers markets. Covid-19 has caused many of these farmers markets to close, disproportionately impacting black farmers and cooperatives. Many of our farmers and their cooperatives will not survive under current market conditions. For those who survive this pandemic, the economic recovery will be a long one requiring policymakers to specifically target support programs which are intentional and inclusive,” **said Cornelius Blanding, Executive Director, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/ Land Assistance Fund.** “We are grateful to Congresswoman Adams for introducing legislation which will stabilize local and regional farmers markets while ensuring that socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers get the technical assistance they need to retool and create marketing opportunities during Covid-19.”

“Farmers and ranchers have been under intense stress and facing market uncertainty for months during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and Representative Adams recognizes that Congress must step up to help. This bill recognizes the need for more effective, targeted aid that meets the real needs of the producers and local food businesses working hard to feed their communities right now,” **said Eric Deeble, Policy Director for the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.**

Adams has focused much of her Agriculture Committee work on coronavirus recovery. Last month, Adams introduced the ***Emergency SNAP Flexibilities Extension Act***, which augments the flexibility that FFCRA provided to states by extending the SNAP waivers the U.S. Department of Agriculture has previously approved for states during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Congresswoman Alma Adams** represents North Carolina’s 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District (Charlotte) and serves as Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education & Labor Committee, where she serves as Chair of the Workforce

Protections Subcommittee. In 2015, she founded the Adams Hunger Initiative to address food insecurity across Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and the 12th Congressional District.

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