

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 3, 2026

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

Dear Secretary Rollins,

We write to you in strong support of specialty crop producers across New York who were adversely impacted by cold temperatures and a severe frost event in April. As a result, many New York farmers are facing significant damage and crop loss this season. We respectfully urge your swift consideration and approval of a Secretarial Disaster Designation as requested by Governor Hochul.

Warmer than normal temperatures created conditions for fruit crops to bloom early and for other specialty crops to start growing early. April's frost had temperatures easily reaching below freezing and badly damaged the early growth of buds and shoots. This disaster has significantly impacted New York farmers growing specialty crops, particularly apples, grapes, stone fruit, pears, and strawberries, as well as early vegetables such as onions. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets estimated an economic loss of more than \$30 million to date with growers facing anywhere from 15 to 100 percent crop loss.

A Secretarial Disaster Designation will unlock resources, such as emergency loans, for farmers across New York so that they can begin the process of recovering. We support the state's request for a Secretarial Disaster Designation for the primary counties of Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Erie, Greene, Niagara, Chautauqua, Onondaga, Orange, Putnam, Schuyler, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester, and Yates Counties, and the contiguous counties of Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Delaware, Erie, Madison, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, and Wayne Counties.

We are grateful for the prompt attention that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has historically given to support New York farmers. In that spirit, we urge you to swiftly approve New York's request.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



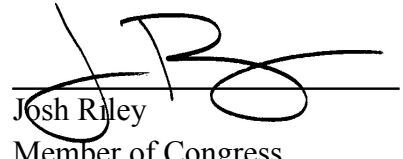
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



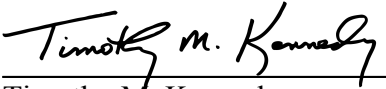
Patrick Ryan
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Josh Riley
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress