



For Immediate Release

American Agri-Women Support Affordable and Nutritious Food for Families

Colchester, Vt. (AgPR) — American Agri-Women ([AAW](#)) recognizes the importance of their members and schools during this pandemic year. AAW appreciates their work in keeping the agriculture chains moving and making sure families are continually being fed.

AAW members have been key players in distributing food boxes, donating food items they grow and raise, and addressing concerns about the National food supply. Getting rural communities moving again positively impacts farmers and ranchers. This also helps meet the nutritional needs of families and getting people back to work who service families in these areas.

The new school year is underway and for many, this means children and educators are going back into the schools. “It may be a start, but as someone who brings awareness to food needs, food waste, and supporting US farms and ranches to the schools through Ag in the Classroom, this is a good thing. Not only for students but agriculture as well,” notes Carie Marshall-Moore, AAW VP of Communications.

With some districts opting for hybrid learning, schools are providing both hot and sack lunches to make sure students are getting their nutritional needs met daily. Properly fueled bodies assist in mental learning, so children must get fed on all learning days, whether at home or physically in school.

A key tie to agriculture is milk at snack breaks and with lunch. Any outlet in which dairy can be utilized again in large amounts will make an impact in the already struggling industry. School lunches also give children access to fresh fruits and vegetables which aid in sales for produce growers. Beef, poultry, and pork are utilized in the hot lunch and sack meals as the main protein source. “Getting back to school this fall is a step in the positive direction to help with the normal school lunch uses for the abundant food supply that US farmers produce,” shares Jane Marshall, AAW First VP.

Many families have struggled to meet their children’s nutritional needs each year over the summer break, but due to the pandemic, it became a widespread National issue. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) stepped up to meet the increasing demands in many ways. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was offered at a wider range of locations and at a greater availability to those who needed it or perhaps didn’t qualify in the past. Last week, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the FNS is extending the SFSP through the end of 2020, or until available funding is exhausted. When the food supply chain disruption showed its impact, it was even more important for everyone to be aware of their food sources and budgeting. The addition of the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box Program partnered with farmers to provide family-sized boxes of produce, dairy, and meat products for distribution in the local communities.

This has been a time AAW and many other agriculture organizations shared the value of agriculture. AAW members have been willing to talk about the setbacks in getting their products to the people who need them. Additionally, how they overcame those problems to make sure people were fed. When doors were shut, challenges were accepted with new ways of marketing directly from the farm. This brought the conversations from the farmers and ranchers directly to the consumers. Lesley Schmidt, AAW VP of Education, “There are many parallels between our passion and commitment to ongoing improvements in agriculture and our communities, especially our schools, to our pride and commitment to continuous improvements on our farms and ranches.”

Direct and factual conversations about what agriculture does for the world is what AAW strives for. Be it educating in the classroom, with consumers, or taking concerns and support to the legislative branches, advocating for agriculture is what AAW does best. AAW members continually bridge the gap between rural, urban, and suburban populations so agriculture can keep families fed, clothed, and powered.

AAW is grateful to its members and the USDA for continuing to provide a variety of safe and nutritious foods while additionally supporting our farms and ranches amid the complex situation we are all in. #StandUpSpeakOut4Ag

About American Agri-Women

[American Agri-Women](#) (AAW) promote the welfare of our national security through a safe and reliable food, fiber, and energy supply. Since 1974, AAW members have worked together to educate consumers, advocate for agriculture, and offer networking and professional development opportunities. For more information about AAW www.americanagriwomen.org. Find AAW on social media at: [Facebook.com/AgriWomen/](https://www.facebook.com/AgriWomen/), [Twitter.com/Women4Ag/](https://twitter.com/Women4Ag/) ([@Women4Ag](https://twitter.com/Women4Ag)) and [Instagram.com/americanagriwomen/](https://www.instagram.com/americanagriwomen/) ([@americanagriwomen](https://www.instagram.com/americanagriwomen/)). #StandUpSpeakOut4Ag

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