

USDA PROVIDES SEAFOOD TRADE RELIEF

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced the availability of direct payments for those hit hardest by ongoing trade disputes, offering financial support to certain sectors of the U.S. seafood industry. USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue released approximately \$530 million in additional funding for the U.S. seafood industry and commercial fishermen impacted by tariffs imposed by foreign governments. The direct USDA payments, provided through the Seafood Trade Relief Program, will be funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation, and implemented by the USDA's Farm Service Agency.

To meet eligibility requirements, seafood species must have been subject to retaliatory tariffs and been affected by more than \$5 million in retaliatory trade damages. Qualified seafood types include the following: Atka Mackerel; Crab (Dungeness, King, and Snow); Southern Tanner; Flounder; Geoduck; Goosefish; Herrings; Lobster; Pacific Cod; Pacific Ocean Perch; Pollock; Sablefish; Salmon; Sole; Squid; Tuna; and Turbot.

Payout rates for the commercial seafood industry will be contingent on the severity of the impact of trade disruptions to U.S. seafood caught and sold, and they will be capped at \$250,000 per applicant.

Eligible participants in the program include all U.S. commercial fishermen with a valid federal or state license or permit to catch seafood who bring their catch to shore and sell or transfer them to another party, or any entity that processes or harvests at sea for commercial purposes.

To participate, the applicant's Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) cannot exceed \$900,000 using the average for the 2016-2018 tax years, however, the AGI threshold does not apply if 75 percent or more is attributable to seafood production, farming, ranching, forestry, or related activities.

Given the wide range of qualified entities, interested parties are advised to work with local USDA Service Centers regarding eligibility for the program and respond quickly in submitting applications to the USDA. Applications will be considered beginning on September 14, 2020, extending through December 14, 2020, and can be found [here](#). Potential applicants can direct any further inquires to their local USDA Service Center, which can be found [here](#). Additionally, answers to frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

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