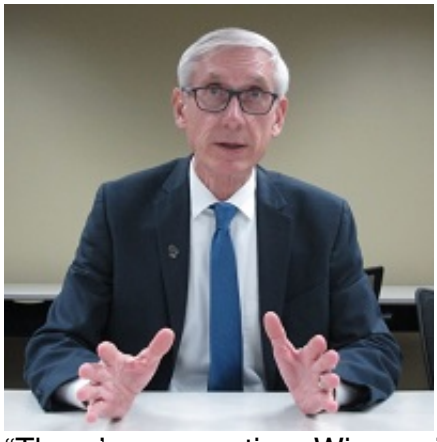
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New direct aid initiative comes after governor distributed $50 million through Farm Support Program last year.

COLUMBUS — Gov. Tony Evers announced Wednesday an additional $50 million in direct payments to support Wisconsin's agricultural producers through a new round of the Wisconsin Farm Support Program, an additional installment of the governor's successful Wisconsin Farm Support Program announced in 2020. Last year, Gov. Evers distributed $50 million in direct aid to farmers through the Wisconsin Farm Support Program. In total, the governor has earmarked more than $100 million from funding the state received from the federal government to support Wisconsin's farmers and agricultural industries.



"There's no question Wisconsin farmers are some of the strongest, most resilient folks in the state, but the last year brought on unique and unprecedented challenges—challenges many of them are still grappling with," said Gov. Evers. "They've always had our back, and now, we

need to have theirs. I'm glad to be providing another round of direct aid to farmers to support their recovery and strengthen one of our state's most important industries."

Farmers have faced low commodity prices in recent years, and the coronavirus pandemic created new challenges for the entire sector with unexpected shocks to agricultural markets. Still Wisconsin's agriculture industry annually contributes nearly $105 billion to the state's economy and provides more than 435,000 jobs, while helping to feed the world.

"Gov. Evers has prioritized our producers during a challenging time," said Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary-designee Randy Romanski. "These timely payments will make a real difference for our farmers, and they are unrestricted, so recipients across Wisconsin can use the money where it is needed most or make up for losses."

In the initial installment of the Farm Support Program announced in May 2020, Gov. Evers announced $50 million in direct aid payments to farmers. Under the Farm Support Program initiative in 2020, each recipient received up to a $3,500 payment. The 2020 Farm Support Program funding was provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This additional investment in the Farm Support Program also builds on the governor's previous pandemic-related investments in Wisconsin's agriculture industry, including $25 million for food security initiatives and funding to boost Wisconsin food products as well as $3.3 million in assistance for the ethanol industry.

Department of Revenue (DOR) Secretary Peter Barca added, "Our team understands the importance of getting help where it is needed in our agricultural communities. We will work with DATCP to ensure a streamlined process to accomplish those goals, and we are eager to serve the Wisconsin farmers who continue to serve all of us."

DATCP will partner with the DOR to administer the program. Applications will open later this year, after the fall harvest, to ensure sufficient time for farmers to learn about the program and apply. The program will be modeled after the successful Wisconsin Farm Support Program, implemented by the Evers Administration in 2020. The 2021 program is funded by the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.