



## *South Carolina Department of Agriculture* Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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## **Weathers Calls for Veto Override, Says Governor's Action is Unfair to South Carolina Farmers**

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers today opposed Governor Haley's veto of flood relief legislation for South Carolina farmers and urged the General Assembly to override the veto when they return to Columbia tomorrow.

“Even though farmers were among those hit hardest by the October floods, with more than \$376 million in losses, the governor is turning her back on our state's largest industry,” Weathers said. “The floods devastated many who lost a year's income and are struggling to put a new crop in the ground. “

The General Assembly passed the farm aid bill with overwhelming majorities, despite the governor's veto threat.

The legislation provides \$40 million to help farmers who sustained major losses not covered by crop insurance and other disaster relief funding. Farmers with at least 40 percent in losses are eligible for one-time grants capped at 20 percent of total loss or \$100,000. The grants only cover production costs such as seed and fertilizer, not debt or new equipment.

“Governor Haley has opposed all types of federal and state relief for South Carolina's farmers, calling it a ‘bailout and ‘unfair,’” Weathers said. “This is no bailout – it is a lifeline that is desperately needed. The only thing unfair would be to deny farmers relief that other businesses and individuals have received.”

FEMA has paid approximately \$375 million for homeowners through flood insurance claims and other assistance, with an additional \$157 million in aid included in the federal budget passed in December. However, farmers were excluded from this financial assistance.

“On behalf of South Carolina's farmers, I urge the General Assembly to do what is right and fair for our state's farmers and override the governor's veto.”

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