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Terranova Ranch, Inc.

November 30, 2020

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Christopher Valadez,
President, Grower Shipper
Association of Central
California

Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

As your State Board of Food and Agriculture we applaud your Administration's ongoing work to address food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic. In April, you launched a \$15 million campaign to support the California Association of Food Bank's Farm to Family Program and invested \$3.64 million in federal and state funds to begin the effort. This program helps to not only respond to the unprecedented need within food banks, but also supports California's farmers and ranchers during a significant market disruption to the food service sector. To date the Farm to Family program has distributed more than 134 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to those in need.

California's farmers and ranchers remain committed to assisting local communities and supporting the unmatched need at food banks, which remain at record levels. To further assist the farm community in leveraging food donations, we are requesting that the Administration support efforts to extend and enhance a tax credit for food donations to food banks – helping to offset a percentage of cost associated with harvest, packing, and transportation. California currently has an existing tax credit which will end in December 2021 unless action is taken. The initial tax credit was a joint effort between the Board and the California Association of Food Banks to engage farmers, further their relationship to the food bank community, increase annual donations and reduce food waste. This tax credit helps to support food donations through assistance with unrecoverable costs. ReFED, a national non-profit organization focusing on food waste, has determined that, "tax incentives make food donation more cost effective and economically beneficial."

Understanding the challenging budgetary environment, we are hopeful this consideration on food donations can be implemented. The ongoing increased need at food banks as a result of this pandemic is not abating



November 30, 2020

Page 2

and on average, pre-COVID 19 food donations, exceed 160 million pounds annually. Food donations are now a critical part of the state's food assistance system. Extending and enhancing the food donation tax credit will help to address the ongoing food insecurity throughout our communities.

Thank you for an opportunity for us to share this important issue. As your State Board we remain committed to assist you on all matters vital to farmers, ranchers, farmworkers and consumers.

Sincerely,



Don Cameron

cc: Secretary Karen Ross, Department of Food and Agriculture