

Feb. 7, 2019

## USDA announces 3rd tranche of aid payments to farmers

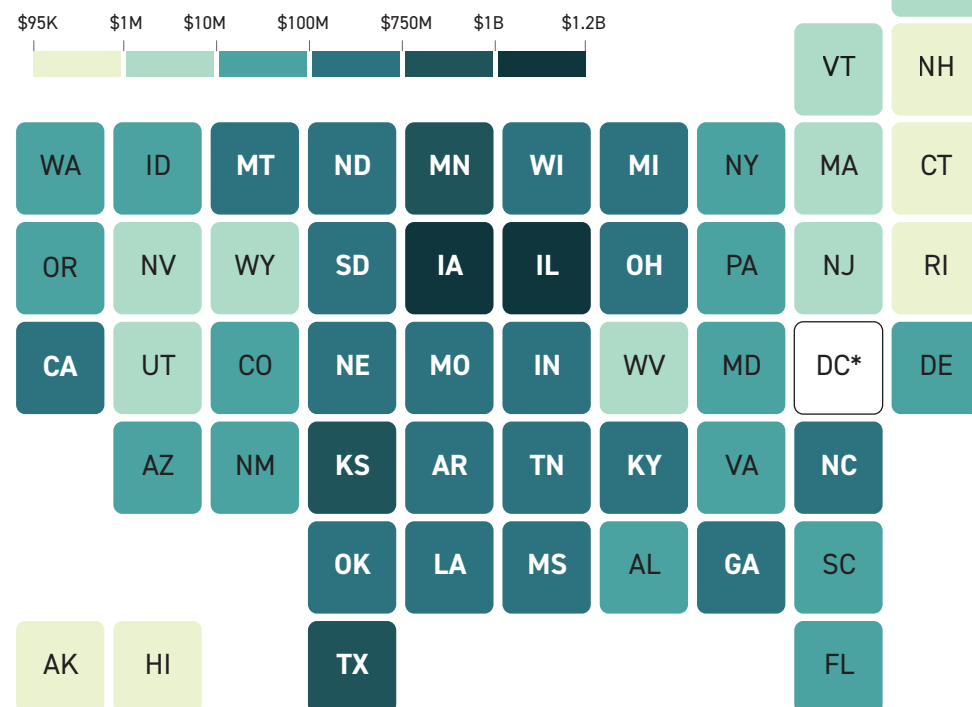
The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Feb. 3 announced a third and final tranche of payments to farmers as a part of its 2019 Market Facilitation Program. Data published by the USDA showed that as of Feb. 3, the program had paid out \$10.9 billion to farmers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Iowa and Illinois farms led by total payments – each state received more than \$1 billion in payments.

Democratic lawmakers have criticized the program, and have said payments are politically motivated, favoring southern states over states in the Midwest.

### Iowa, Illinois and Texas lead by total payments

#### MFP payments to states

TOTAL PAYMENTS, AUG. 19, 2019 TO FEB. 3, 2020



\*Washington, D.C. has received no payments via the program.

### Senate Democrats accuse program of favoring southern states

The payments are meant to assist farmers who were significantly affected by tariffs on U.S. exports, primarily levied by China as a part of the U.S.-China trade dispute. Iowa, Illinois and Texas led by total payments received. In previous years, leading exports from these states to China have included meat, soybeans and sorghum.

About 94 percent of all payments were made to farmers of non-specialty crops like soybeans and wheat. Another 4 percent of payments were made for livestock, and the remaining payments were made for specialty crops like almonds, pecans and fresh grapes and sweet cherries.

The first round of payments began in August 2019. The payments have been made in several forms, though primarily via direct payments to producers. The third round of payments will be based on plantings of eligible crops made in 2019.

A November 2019 Senate Agriculture Committee minority staff report showed southern counties were likelier to receive higher payouts from the program than midwest and other counties. Ninety-five percent of counties that received a payout of more than \$100 were in the south, while 77 percent of counties to receive the minimum payout amount were in the Midwest and other regions.

Sources: USDA; POLITICO Pro Reports

By Taylor Miller Thomas, POLITICO Pro DataPoint