Secretary Perdue Commits to Prioritizing Food Waste Solutions

(Washington, D.C., May 8, 2018)—U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue hosted a food waste roundtable with Representatives Chellie Pingree (ME-1) and David Young (IA-3), food industry leaders, and non-profit groups at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today. This roundtable, the first of many USDA public events on food waste, serves as an opportunity to raise awareness while discussing solutions with leaders throughout the entire food supply chain.

Following the roundtable, Secretary Perdue issued the following statement:
“Our nation’s agricultural abundance should be used to nourish those in need, not fill the trash,” said Secretary Perdue. “So many people work on food waste issues in their own spheres, but it’s time to change the culture and adopt a holistic approach to get everyone working together and sharing ideas. I commend Reps. Pingree and Young for addressing this issue on Capitol Hill and for their desire to find collaborative, common sense solutions. USDA remains committed to helping reduce food waste, and we are excited to work with all stakeholders from farm to fork to further elevate this effort and fulfill our motto, to ‘Do right and feed everyone.’”

**Background:**
While food loss and waste eats up nearly 40% of the food supply in the U.S., millions of Americans need access to safe, wholesome, affordable food. Consumers are responsible for most food loss and waste in the U.S., racking up almost 90 billion pounds annually, or 20% of the U.S. food supply. The retail sector is responsible for about 10%, totaling 43 billion pounds. USDA is uniquely positioned to address this problem by working with farmers, industry, and consumers to raise food loss and waste awareness and share best practices.

Below is a full list of the food waste roundtable participants:
- Rep. Pingree (ME)
- Rep. Young (IA)
- Haley Swartz, National Consumers League
- Regina Northouse, Food Recovery Network
- Katie Sandson, Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic
- Matt Knott, Feeding America
- Jon Hixson, YUM! Brands Inc
- Jessica Montoya, Sodexo
- Kyle Waide, Atlanta Community Food Bank
- Brett Reinford, Reinford Farms, PA
- Mace Thornton, American Farm Bureau Federation
- Ricky Ashenfelter, Spoiler Alert
- Kai Robertson, World Resources Institute