



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

September 23, 2025

THE HONORABLE MARK MESSMER  
United States House of Representatives  
1208 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Messmer,

Thank you for your September 2, 2025, letter regarding the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) planned reorganization efforts. The Department is dedicated to refocusing its core operations to better align with its founding mission of supporting American farming, ranching, and forestry. I appreciate you and your colleagues' bipartisan support and feedback during this effort to bring USDA closer to its constituency.

Per the Secretary's Memorandum, the Department will be transparent and use a common-sense approach. Indianapolis, Indiana, is a natural fit for one of the five proposed regional hubs. Not only is the cost of living significantly lower than the National Capitol Region, but also, as you mention in your letter, Indiana serves as a crossroads of American agriculture. We want people to join USDA to build a career, start a family, and stay with us – and Indiana supports that goal.

Thank you, again, for your letter. This type of constructive feedback is vital as we move forward with USDA's reorganization efforts. Please note it will be included as an official comment. If you have further questions, your staff can contact USDA's Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095 or [ocr@usda.gov](mailto:ocr@usda.gov). A copy of this response letter has been sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Stephen Alexander Vaden", is positioned above the typed name.

Stephen Alexander Vaden  
Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture