September 30, 2026

The Honorable Josh Stein, Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Re: Immediate Relief for North Carolina Farmers Facing Record Diesel Prices

Dear Governor Stein,

On behalf of North Carolina's agriculture and forestry industry, we are writing to call attention to a serious and immediate economic challenge facing our agricultural community: the extraordinary increase in diesel fuel prices. Coupled with rising input costs, these increases are further eroding already razor-thin margins for our food and fiber producers.

North Carolina farmers are currently working to bring crops out of the field while facing diesel prices that have reached unprecedented levels. As of September 22, the average price of diesel in North Carolina was approximately $6.23 per gallon. The timing could hardly be worse. Farmers have already invested months of labor and significant amounts of money into producing this year's crops. Unlike many businesses, farmers generally cannot simply increase the price of their product to cover unexpected increases in their costs. Commodity prices are largely determined by the market. Farmers are essentially "price takers" and cannot simply add a fuel surcharge to their products. The result is that these extraordinary fuel costs are being absorbed by farmers at a time when many operations have little room left in their budgets.

We recognize that many of the factors driving fuel prices are beyond the control of state government. However, that does not mean the state is powerless. We respectfully ask you to explore and pursue every reasonable measure available to provide temporary economic relief to farmers facing these extraordinary diesel costs, including temporarily waiving documentation relating to diesel licensing and excise tax requirements to the extent necessary to permit dyed diesel to be used on highways during the harvest period. Authorizing size and weight exemptions for truck loads could provide further relief by reducing the number of trips for trucks hauling products to market or feed to livestock.

We respectfully urge you to make relief an immediate priority and to pursue whatever reasonable measures are available to reduce the economic pressure on farm families during this critical time.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of North Carolina agriculture.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness Henderson County
Blue Ridge Apple Growers Association
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
Carolina Loggers Association
Corn Growers Association of North Carolina
North Carolina Agribusiness Council
North Carolina Apple Growers Association

North Carolina Blueberry Council
North Carolina Cattlemen's Association
North Carolina Christmas Tree Association
North Carolina Cotton Producers Association
North Carolina Dairy Producers Association
North Carolina Egg Association
North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
North Carolina Forestry Association
North Carolina Grange
North Carolina Peanut Growers Association
North Carolina Poultry Federation
North Carolina Pork Council
North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association
North Carolina Soybean Producers Association
North Carolina Sweetpotato Commission
North Carolina Tomato Growers Association
Tobacco Associates
Tobacco Growers Association of North Carolina