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**National Young Farmers Coalition applauds confirmation of  
Sonny Perdue as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture**  
*Farmers and rural communities need strong leadership in President's cabinet*

**HUDSON, NY (April 24, 2017)** — The [National Young Farmers Coalition](#) (NYFC), the only national advocacy organization solely dedicated to supporting America's young farmers and ranchers, congratulated former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue on his confirmation as the next U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

“With the rapidly aging farm population and the future of rural economies at stake, now is a critical time for leadership,” said National Young Farmers Coalition executive director and co-founder Lindsey Lusher Shute, who is herself a young farmer. “Already we’ve seen the very real consequences of delaying Mr. Perdue’s nomination—farmers and rural Americans have lacked the champion they need in the President’s Cabinet. We hope that ends today, and we congratulate Secretary Perdue on his confirmation.”

Noting that the Secretary will face urgent issues like the shortfall of young and beginning farmers to succeed those entering retirement, Andrew Bahrenburg, national policy director for the National Young Farmers Coalition, said: “Recruiting, training, and supporting the next generation of farmers and rural leaders should be a day-one priority for Secretary Perdue, and we look forward to working with his department to better serve the unique needs of today’s young farmers and ranchers. The future of our economy depends on it.”

Two-thirds of U.S. farmland is expected to transition to new ownership over the next two decades as older farmers retire, but there are not enough young farmers ready to take their place. Only six percent of farmers are under the age of 35 years, and potential new farmers face extensive structural barriers to starting agricultural businesses.

*Committed to building a viable future for American agriculture, the [National Young Farmers Coalition \(NYFC\)](#) is an advocacy network of farmers, ranchers, and consumers working to ensure that all young farmers have the chance to succeed. Visit NYFC on the web at [www.youngfarmers.org](http://www.youngfarmers.org), and on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).*

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