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## **Sec. Vilsack: USDA buying another \$30 million in pork products**

**By Agri-Pulse Staff**

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Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced Thursday that USDA intends to purchase an additional \$30 million in pork products this month for federal food and nutrition assistance programs. USDA will survey potential suppliers to seek the lowest overall cost by publicly inviting bids and awarding contracts to responsible bidders. Altogether, USDA has purchased approximately \$151 million in pork products for food and nutrition assistance programs this year through annual appropriation and Recovery Act funding.

“These purchases will assist pork producers who are currently struggling due to depressed market conditions and reflects the Obama Administration’s ongoing work to support struggling producers,” Vilsack said. “This action will help mitigate further downward prices, stabilize market conditions, stimulate the economy, and provide high quality, nutritious food to recipients of USDA’s nutrition programs.”

The pork products scheduled for purchase will reflect the variety of high-quality food products USDA provides each year to support the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and The Emergency Food Assistance Program. USDA also makes emergency food purchases for distribution to victims of natural disasters.

Government food experts work to ensure that all purchased food is healthy and nutritious. Food items are normally required to be low in fat, sugar and sodium. The commodities must meet specified grade requirements and be USDA-certified to ensure quality. USDA only purchases products that are grown in the United States.

For more information on purchase details, interested suppliers should contact Duane Williams, Contracting Officer, Livestock and Seed Program at (202)720-2650 or by e-mail at: [duane.williams2@ams.usda.gov](mailto:duane.williams2@ams.usda.gov). The AMS Commodity Procurement Web page can be found at: [www.ams.usda.gov/lscp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/lscp)