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(202) 225-2771

October 1, 2026

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

I write to you regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to reduce risk from per-and polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in sewage sludge, also known as biosolids. As you and I have discussed at length, PFAS chemicals have been linked to serious health effects, including cancer, reproductive and developmental harms, and weakened immune systems. Maine farmers have had their livelihoods disrupted due to PFAS contamination, which originated in sewage sludge that was spread as fertilizer by farmers who were told by the government that it was safe to use. Unfortunately, this sewage sludge contained PFAS, leading to contamination of agricultural land, products, and water.

Maine is far from the only state in this situation, but we have been on the front lines on testing, cleanup, and research. An extensive state investigation found contamination found on over 50 farms because of sewage sludge. These farmers have had their livelihoods lost or threatened and experienced health problems. This is an issue across the country whether states are taking action or not, and it is imperative the federal government, and EPA specifically, continues to advance research and remediation efforts to protect our food supply and rural economies, including by actively preventing additional contamination.

EPA's Draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS), released in January 2025, was an important step towards eventual restrictions on applying contaminated sludge to farmland, but rather than finalizing this risk assessment, the Agency's release of Draft Guidance for Reducing Risk from PFOA and PFOS in Biosolids leaves regulatory next steps unclear and farmers in limbo.

Please respond to these questions by November 16, 2026:

- Does EPA intend to finalize the Draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS)?
- If not, how is that decision documented, and what scientific review supported that conclusion?
- If not, how does EPA intend to prevent additional land contamination and protect farmers specifically from the additional, unique exposure pathways they face from land application of sewage sludge?
- What are EPA's next steps to propose enforceable regulatory limits on land application of sewage sludge?
- Does EPA plan to expand its focus beyond PFOA and PFOS to other types of PFAS contamination?
- How is EPA working with USDA to help farmers, ranchers, and rural communities manage PFAS impacts in agricultural settings?

Without additional action by EPA, farmers across the country will continue to be at heightened risk from PFAS exposure from land application of biosolids. It is critical that EPA takes additional steps to protect our rural communities and food supply. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related
Agencies