

U.S. Food and Agriculture Dialogue for Trade
North America Food & Agriculture Trade Coalition

March 16, 2017

Dear Senator:

We believe prompt confirmation of Robert Lighthizer as U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is an essential step in putting in place a U.S. government team that can robustly engage in trade negotiations to further enhance U.S. economic growth and job creation.

The undersigned organizations, working collectively through the U.S. Food and Agriculture Dialogue for Trade, represent the diverse food and agricultural sector, which supports more than 15 million American jobs.

The Trade Expansion Act of 1962 gives USTR a central role in the development and coordination of U.S. international trade policy and oversight of negotiations with other countries. With reconsideration of our nation's most fundamental trade relationships underway, the United States needs its full team on the field as we review major agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Towards this end, our organizations are also eager to see the swift consideration and confirmation of Sonny Perdue as United States Secretary of Agriculture.

Our industry represents one of NAFTA's biggest success stories. Since the agreement was enacted, U.S. food and agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico have more than quadrupled—growing from \$8.9 billion in 1993 to over \$38 billion in 2016. We also recognize that NAFTA is now over 20 years old and improvements to the agreement can be made. We stand ready to work this Administration as it identifies ways to modernize NAFTA while preserving the core benefits of the agreement that have greatly expanded U.S. food and agricultural trade within North America during the past two decades, with ripple effects that have benefitted the U.S. economy and created jobs.

The U.S. food and agriculture sector is heavily dependent on our current access to Mexico and Canada. NAFTA has played a central role in boosting incomes for millions of U.S. farmers, ranchers, and allied manufacturers – and continues to provide important and profitable markets for our nation's rural agriculture-based communities. As the Administration and Congress work together to identify constructive opportunities to modernize NAFTA, it will remain critical to preserve what has worked well in that agreement by building forward from the base of existing market access and tariff provisions. Therefore, it is imperative that we have a USTR and their full team in place to lead these efforts in modernizing NAFTA.

To ensure U.S. trade policy puts all Americans first, including U.S. food and agriculture producers, we believe it is of utmost importance to confirm the USTR as soon as possible. We look forward to working with Mr. Lighthizer and other Trump Administration officials on efforts to develop and implement a U.S. trade policy that continues to promote America's food and agriculture producers and exporters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness Association of Iowa

Almond Alliance of California

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Food Institute
American Peanut Council
American Peanut Product Manufacturers, Inc.
American Potato Trade Alliance
American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association
Archer Daniels Midland Company
Arizona Grain, Inc.
Bartlett Grain Company
Beachner Grain, Inc.
Big River Rice and Grain
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Blue Diamond Growers
Bunge
California Cherry Export Association
California Dairies, Inc.
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Grain and Feed Association
Campbell Soup Company
Cargill, Incorporated
CHS Inc.
Corn Refiners Association
The Cranberry Institute
D. E. Bondurant Grain Co. Inc.
Degesch America, Inc.
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Elanco Animal Health
Gavilon

Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA)
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Grocery Manufacturers Association
Hilmar Cheese Company
Hop Growers of America
Independent Bakers Association
Ingredion Incorporated
International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses (IARW)
International Dairy Foods Association
Kansas Grain and Feed Association
Lortscher Agri Service, Inc.
MCT Dairies, Inc.
Mead Johnson Nutrition
Meat Import Council of America
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Michigan Agricultural Commodities, Inc.
Michigan Shippers
Midwest Food Products Association
Milk Specialties Global
Minnesota Grain and Feed Association
Missouri Agribusiness Association
National Association of Egg Farmers
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Chicken Council
National Confectioners Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Potato Council
National Renderers Association
National Restaurant Association
National Sunflower Association
Nebraska Grain and Feed Association
North American Export Grain Association
North American Meat Institute
North American Millers' Association
North Dakota Grain Dealers Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association
Oklahoma Grain and Feed Association
Pet Food Institute
Pride Ag Resources
Produce Marketing Association
Rocky Mountain Agribusiness Association
SNAC International
South Dakota Grain and Feed Association
Sweetener Users Association
Tate & Lyle Americas
Team Marketing Alliance
Texas Grain and Feed Association
Trugman Nash LLC
Tyson Foods, Inc.
United Egg Producers
United Fresh Produce Association

USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council

USA Rice

U.S. Apple Association

U.S. Canola Association

U.S. Dairy Export Council

U.S. Dry Bean Council

U.S. Hide, Skin and Leather Association

U.S. Meat Export Federation

US Rice Producers Association

U.S. Wheat Associates

Wheeler Brothers Grain Company, LLC

WineAmerica

Wine Institute

Wisconsin Agri-Business Association