

May 14, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear President Biden,

The undersigned food, agriculture, and seafood trade associations respectfully urge the expeditious nomination of the Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

America's farmers, ranchers, processors, exporters and food manufacturers are foundational in the strength of our country – not just in rural areas, but in feeding, fueling and clothing people in America's cities and around the world. Key to the economic viability of our working farmers and ranchers is a fair income, and key to their income is the need to export approximately 20 percent of overall U.S. agricultural production. Our farmers, ranchers, processors, exporters and food manufacturers are the reason that American agriculture is one of the most export competitive sectors in the United States and the world. The agriculture and food sector is also critical to American jobs and made-in-America production, ranking as one of the largest U.S. manufacturing sectors, and directly supporting nearly 20 million jobs – the equivalent of more than 13 percent of U.S. employment.¹ These jobs provide economic opportunity in rural communities but also for workers throughout the supply chain producing and distributing food and agriculture goods across the country. We are also increasingly focused on achieving critical environmental sustainability and climate goals, building on the work our sector has already accomplished and continues to invest in.

Because of the pressing importance of improved and expanded market access for U.S. food and agriculture we request that you move swiftly to nominate an individual to serve as the Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative . The farmers, ranchers, processors, exporters and food manufacturing workers we represent rely on the Chief Agriculture Negotiator to be a vigorous advocate for all U.S. agricultural interests and for the role that well-crafted trade policy can play in opening foreign doors to products grown by U.S. farmers and produced by U.S. food workers. This person will be key in negotiating resolution of unwarranted trade barriers to U.S. products, opening new export markets for made-in-America products, and will be essential in addressing agricultural sustainability issues in trade discussions.

The world is moving forward on trade agreements, and unjustified barriers to U.S. food and agricultural exports are growing. We know this Administration recognizes that bolstering rural communities is a critical component of building back better; robust U.S. leadership on agricultural trade policy is critical to advancing that agenda. We view the swift nomination and appointment of a Chief Agricultural Negotiator as central to achieving improved and expanded market access for the U.S. food, agriculture, and seafood sectors.

Thank you.

¹ <https://feedingtheeconomy.com/>.

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Peanut Council
American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association
American Sugar Alliance
Animal Health Institute
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Colorado Dairy Farmers
Corn Refiners Association
CropLife America
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative
Farmers for Free Trade
Fresh Produce Association of the Americas
Idaho Dairymen's Association, Inc.
Idaho Potato Commission
International Dairy Foods Association
Iowa State Dairy Association
Kansas Livestock Association
Leather and Hide Council of America
Maine Potato Board
Meat Import Council of America
Minnesota Milk
National All-Jersey Inc.
National Association of State Departments
of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Chicken Council
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Fisheries Institute
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Potato Council
National Sorghum Producers
National Turkey Federation
Nebraska State Dairy Association
North American Export Grain Association
North American Meat Institute
North Carolina Dairy Producers Association
North Carolina Potato Association
North Dakota Grain Growers Association
Northeast Dairy Producers Association
Northern Plains Potato Growers Association
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association
Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc.
Produce Marketing Association
South East Dairy Farmers Association
Sweetener Users Association
The Hardwood Federation
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Durum Growers Association
U.S. Wheat Associates
United Fresh Produce Association
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
USA Rice

Washington State Potato Commission
Western Growers

Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers
Association

CC: Ambassador Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative
Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture