

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

April 26, 2017

Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations, working collectively through the U.S. Food and Agriculture Dialogue for Trade that represents the diverse food and agricultural sector, urge prompt confirmation of Robert Lighthizer as U.S. Trade Representative (USTR). Our industry sectors support more than 15 million jobs from coast-to-coast and constitute the single largest sector of the U.S. manufacturing industry.

The Trade Expansion Act of 1962 gives USTR a central role in developing and coordinating U.S. international trade policy and leading trade negotiations with other countries. Given the Trump Administration's plans to notify Congress soon of its intent to "renegotiate" the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Senate confirmation of Mr. Lighthizer is particularly urgent. His confirmation is an essential step in enabling the U.S. government to put in place its team to engage robustly in trade negotiations on NAFTA and with Asia-Pacific nations to further enhance U.S. economic growth and job creation.

Throughout his confirmation process, Mr. Lighthizer continuously highlighted the importance of international trade to the U.S. food and agriculture community. Specifically, with respect to NAFTA renegotiation, Mr. Lighthizer went on record stating, "In updating the NAFTA, we will seek to improve our trade relationship with Canada and Mexico in order to secure the greatest possible benefits for U.S. workers farmers, ranchers, and businesses." His confirmation hearing was permeated with similar statements espousing his and the Administration's commitment to build on the success of existing accords, like NAFTA, and to reengage in pursuing other trade agreements to further grow U.S. food and agriculture exports.

As the Administration and Congress work together to identify constructive opportunities to modernize NAFTA and reengage in pursuing other important trade accords, we urge the Senate to expeditiously move on confirming Mr. Lighthizer as the USTR. Simply put, U.S. national interests are at stake. U.S. trade interests are imperiled by delay, during which foreign competitors are ramping up efforts to supplant U.S. leadership and take away U.S. market share while nervous U.S. foreign customers seek out non-U.S. suppliers to meet their import requirements to ensure basic food security for their people.

To enable the United States to reengage on trade to benefit all Americans, including U.S. food and agriculture producers and agribusinesses, it is of utmost importance to confirm Mr. Lighthizer as USTR immediately. We look forward to working with Mr. Lighthizer, other Administration officials and Congress to develop and implement a coherent and effective U.S. trade policy that continues to promote America's food and agriculture producers and exporters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

AG Processing, Inc.

Agribusiness Association of Iowa

Almond Alliance of California

American Bakers Association

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
Animal Health Institute
Archer Daniels Midland Company
Arizona Grain, Inc.
Attebury Grain
Bartlett Grain Company
Beachner Grain, Inc.
Big River Rice and Grain
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Blue Diamond Growers
Bunge
California Blueberry Commission
California Cherry Export Association
California Dairies, Inc.
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Grain and Feed Association
Campbell Soup Company
Cargill, Incorporated
Central Missouri AGRIService, LLC
Central Valley Ag Cooperative
CHS Inc.
CoMark Grain Marketing L.L.C.
Corn Refiners Association

The Cranberry Institute
Crossroads Cooperative Association
Dairy Business Milk Marketing Cooperative
D. E. Bondurant Grain Co. Inc.
Degesch America, Inc.
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Elanco Animal Health
Farmers Grain Terminal, Inc.
Fresh Produce Association of the Americas
Gavilon
Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA)
Grain Craft
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Grocery Manufacturers Association
GROWMARK, Inc.
Hardwood Federation
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
Land O'Lakes, Inc.
Louis Dreyfus Company North America
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 Cattlemen's Beef 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 Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Renderers Association
National Restaurant Association
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
National Turkey Federation
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 Cattlemen's Association
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association
Ohio Soybean Association
Oklahoma Grain and Feed Association
Organic Trade Association
Panhandle Peanut Growers Association
Pet Food Institute
Pride Ag Resources
Pro Cooperative
Produce Marketing Association
Purina Animal Nutrition
Rocky Mountain Agribusiness Association
SNAC International
South Dakota Grain and Feed Association
Southwest Council of Agribusiness
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
United Grain Corporation
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Poultry and Egg Export 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

Vita Plus

Western Peanut Growers Association

Wheeler Brothers Grain Company, LLC

WineAmerica

Wine Institute

Wisconsin Agri-Business Association