

Ambassador Ron Kirk
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

Earlier this year, a broad-based group of food and agricultural organizations and companies wrote to you to express support for proposed U.S.-EU free trade agreement negotiations and to urge you to ensure that any resulting agreement would be comprehensive in nature and address important impediments to trade in agricultural products. We applaud continued statements by Administration officials confirming their intention to insist on such an outcome, but recent statements by EU officials suggest they are thinking differently.

Press reports in connection with the recent approval of the FTA negotiations by the European Parliament have raised doubts about whether the EU will be prepared to deal with sanitary and phytosanitary issues and other nontariff barriers, which have become the most important form of barrier to U.S. food and agricultural exports to the EU. Unless these measures are addressed satisfactorily, the effort to achieve free trade in the agricultural sector will fail.

We believe that, carried out properly, a U.S.-EU FTA would generate economic growth and create many thousands of new jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. This means negotiating the type of high-standard, 21st-century agreement that has been central to the Administration's trade policy efforts. This is not the type of agreement the EU has negotiated with other trading partners. Its FTAs have excluded agricultural goods it produces. And they have not addressed a means to address regulatory measures that conflict with both U.S. interests and WTO rules. Examples of these run the gamut from the EU's ban on the use of hormones in cattle to GMO approval and labeling regulations that restrict U.S. corn, soy and refined corn product exports to unjustifiable restrictions on production methods in poultry, pork and beef (pathogen reduction treatments), unscientific restrictions on the use of safe feed additives in pork and beef (ractopamine), imposition of arbitrary sustainability requirements on the production of feedstocks in the U.S. and other countries for biofuels used in the EU, as well as many other unjustified restrictions impacting a wide swath of U.S. agriculture. Such measures must be resolved as part of the FTA negotiations.

The EU has also worked to accomplish in its FTAs what it has been unable to achieve multilaterally. The EU has sought the inclusion of language on geographical indications (GIs) that would grant it exclusive rights to certain product names that have been widely used outside of Europe for many years. This objective was reinforced by the EU Parliament which made U.S. acceptance of EU GI policy an expressed element of its approval of the talks with the U.S.

For these reasons, we cannot help but be skeptical that the EU is prepared to undertake a U.S.-style comprehensive negotiation and to include the agricultural sector in a truly positive manner.

As we stated in our previous letter, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiation should serve as the template for a U.S.-EU FTA. As you said in a speech earlier this year, "TPP is also about building the best trade policy for the future." We agree with this sentiment and applaud the approach you have

consistently taken to achieve those objectives. A free trade agreement with the EU based on the same principles would validate your policies and help ensure that U.S. trade policy remains on the right path.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Food Institute
American Meat Institute
American Soybean Association
California Cherry Export Association
California Fresh Tomato Growers
California Pear Growers
Corn Refiners Association
Grocery Manufacturers Association
Hormel Foods Corporation
International Dairy Foods Association
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)
National Barley Growers Association
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Corn Growers Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain & Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Turkey Federation
North American Equipment Dealers Association
North American Export Grain Association
North American Meat Association
Smithfield Foods
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Grains Council
U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc.
U.S. Meat Export Federation
U.S. Wheat Associates
United Egg Association
United Egg Producers
US Dry Bean Council
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice Federation