

U.S. Biotech Crops Alliance

November 17, 2015

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of the U.S. Department of
Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of the U.S. Department of
Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230

Ambassador Michael Froman
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
Washington, DC 20508

The U.S. Biotech Crops Alliance (USBCA) appreciates the Administration's continued efforts to elevate agricultural biotechnology as a priority economic policy issue with the Peoples Republic of China (PRC). The recent visit of President Xi Jinping marked a significant milestone in the multi-year engagement, establishing a series of concrete commitments aimed at creating an enabling environment for agricultural innovation between the United States and China, including improving the biotechnology import-approval process and reaffirming the importance of implementing a timely, transparent, predictable and science-based approval process. To this end, the USBCA views these commitments as the beginning of a constructive process to reshape the bilateral relationship on agricultural biotechnology, further enhance trade facilitation and food security and strengthen the underlying relationship on agricultural trade and market access for U.S. agricultural commodities produced through modern agricultural biotechnology.

As the Administration prepares for the upcoming U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT), the USBCA is looking to the USG to follow-up on the short-term commitments made by China to advance the full queue of products, and specifically to issue safety certificates for all products that have cleared the National Biosafety Committee without delay and promptly advance the files submitted in the November 2015 window forward for approval by the Ministry of Agriculture by year end. It is critical that the PRC begin to act on the recent Presidential commitments by establishing a predictable pattern of action related to biotech approval, including a return of providing timely feedback on applications and issuing decisions three times per year following each application window. Further, the Administration should consider creating periodic high-level engagements with China throughout 2016 to gauge progress towards these commitments.

In addition, the inaugural Strategic Agricultural Innovation Dialogue (SAID), a deliverable of the 2014 JCCT and held on the margins of President Xi's State Visit to the United States, presented a tremendous opportunity for government officials and private sector from both

the United States and China to discuss shared goals of fostering agricultural innovation. The USBCA looks forward to seeing the SAID continue with a focused work plan aimed at supporting policy improvements and strengthening cooperation.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Seed Trade Association

American Soybean Association

Biotechnology Industry Organization

Corn Refiners Association

National Association of Wheat Growers

North American Export Grain Association

North American Millers Association

National Corn Growers Association

National Grain and Feed Association

National Oilseed Processors Association

U.S. Canola Association

U.S. Grains Council

U.S. Soybean Export Council

CC: Ambassador Darci Vetter, Office of the United States Trade Representative
The Honorable Stefan Selig, United States Department of Commerce
The Honorable Michael Scuse, United States Department of Agriculture
Caroline Atkinson, White House Deputy National Security Advisor for International Economics