



The Honorable Brooke Rollins  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

March 11, 2025

Dear Secretary Rollins,

AmericanHort appreciates the administration's commitment to securing our borders and fostering a fair economic playing field through tariffs. As the leading national trade association representing the U.S. horticulture industry, we want to bring to your attention several critical industry inputs that are exclusively produced in Canada or Mexico, with no viable domestic alternatives. We respectfully request that these essential imports be exempt from the proposed 25% tariffs on horticultural products from Canada and Mexico.

AmericanHort represents 20,000 members and affiliated businesses across the horticulture supply chain, including breeders, growers, retailers, landscapers, and manufacturers. The industry contributes nearly \$350 billion in annual sales and supports over 2.3 million jobs. Millions of Americans rely on horticultural products to beautify their landscapes, support environmental stewardship, and enjoy the physical and mental health benefits of gardening within their own homes. However, these tariffs threaten the industry's stability by driving up costs, disrupting supply chains, and restricting access to essential inputs that are not readily available domestically.

The horticulture industry, like North American automakers, relies on an integrated cross-border supply chain to enhance efficiency and maintain a steady flow of ornamental crops. Canada and Mexico provide essential growing conditions that complement U.S. greenhouse production, ensuring year-round availability of plants. Without these inputs, American growers will face severe disruptions.

### **Essential Inputs That Require Exemptions** **Sphagnum Peat Moss (Canada)**

Peat moss is a vital component of potting soil and growing media, and the North American peat industry is largely based in Canada. Canada produces 450 million cubic feet of peat moss annually, supplying 96% of all U.S. imports. Peatlands take centuries to form and cannot be artificially created, making Canada the only reliable source. With limited commercially viable peatlands in the U.S., a tariff on Canadian sphagnum peat moss would severely harm American growers.

### **Potash Fertilizer (Canada)**

The U.S. imports over 90% of its potash fertilizer, with nearly 85% coming from Canada. With no viable substitutes for potash, maintaining uninterrupted trade is

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essential to ensuring a stable and affordable supply. Disruptions to this supply chain would have widespread repercussions, not just for large-scale agricultural operations but also for nurseries, greenhouses, and ornamental plant producers. Maintaining stable and affordable access to potash is critical to the industry's competitiveness.

#### **Unrooted Cuttings & Ornamental Crops (Mexico & Canada)**

Many American horticulture companies depend on Mexico's warm climate to cultivate unrooted cuttings of key plants like geraniums, poinsettias, and flower seed crops such as marigolds during the winter and summer months. These cuttings require optimal growing conditions to ensure they are ready for finishing in U.S. greenhouses. Mexico's high light levels and warm temperatures during winter create ideal conditions for plant development, allowing growers to achieve the necessary size and quality. Without access to Mexico's production farms, U.S. growers could face yield reductions of up to 70% due to colder temperatures and reduced daylight when growing domestically.

Similarly, Canada's cooler summer climate is essential for growing cool-season ornamental crops. High U.S. summer temperatures make it difficult to start these crops domestically. By leveraging Canada's climate, growers can ensure high-quality plants for the fall and winter sales seasons.

#### **Conclusion & Request**

The U.S. horticulture industry relies on a well-integrated North American supply chain because many essential inputs cannot be produced domestically at the necessary scale or quality—if at all. Tariffs on these key inputs would drive up costs, reduce production capacity, and weaken the U.S. horticulture sector. Margin compression in our industry, caused by rising labor and material costs, could be worsened if tariffs get passed onto consumers. Our growers and retailers are already beginning to experience market uncertainty resulting from proposed tariffs.

We respectfully request that sphagnum peat moss, potash fertilizers, unrooted cuttings, live plants, and seeds (among other critical horticultural inputs) be exempted from the proposed tariffs on Canadian and Mexican imports. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and provide additional industry data to support these exemptions. We look forward to working with you and the administration to support and strengthen American horticulture.

Sincerely,



Matt Mika  
Vice President  
Advocacy & Government Affairs  
AmericanHort