

December 18, 2018

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer  
U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17th St, NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

The undersigned food and agricultural trade organizations, representing virtually all of our nation's food and farming sector, applaud your efforts to negotiate a trade agreement with the European Union (EU) that achieves reciprocity in our bilateral trade relationship. An agreement that eliminates tariffs and quotas and removes all non-science-based regulatory barriers would cause an exponential increase in U.S. food and agriculture exports, create new jobs, and eliminate the absurd trade deficit in food and agriculture that the United States has with the EU.

Our trade deficit in food and agricultural goods with the EU has ballooned from \$1.8 billion in 2000 to nearly \$11 billion last year. This is not because European consumers do not want American products. It is because EU tariffs and non-science-based regulations deny consumers a choice.

We greatly appreciate your insistence in discussions with EU officials that they remove all tariff and non-tariff barriers on food and agricultural products, and we urge you to continue stressing to them that only a truly comprehensive agreement will be acceptable to the Administration and, ultimately, to the U.S. Congress. This message must be communicated clearly and urgently, since reports indicate that the EU Commission expects to receive a mandate from the Member States for these negotiations in early 2019. This mandate will establish the parameters for EU positions in the talks and could, if agriculture is omitted, preordain failure of the negotiations before they begin.

Our organizations could not fairly represent our members if we were to support even the launching of negotiations with the EU on those terms, let alone support Congressional approval of a deal that excludes provisions that resolve measures restricting or preventing access to the European market for high-quality, safe American farm and food products.

EU officials, however, apparently are reluctant to have comprehensive negotiations because they know this would require lifting import barriers that protect EU farmers and removing regulatory measures that are politically expedient but scientifically unjustified or overly restrictive. It also is ironic that the EU is insisting on a scope that likely violates multilateral rules it claims to defend, since excluding a sector as broad and diverse as agriculture seems to

contradict the GATT Article XXIV 8(b) requirement that free trade areas must eliminate barriers "on substantially all trade."

If the EU wishes to conclude a trade agreement that addresses inequities in trade between us and that ultimately will be approved by Congress, such barriers and measures that restrict U.S. agriculture's access, as politically difficult to discuss as they may be, must be included as part of negotiations and successfully addressed in a final agreement.

We stand ready to assist you and your negotiators as this important effort moves forward.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Feed Industry Association

American Peanut Council

American Peanut Product Manufacturers, Inc

American Seed Trade Association

American Soybean Association

Animal Health Institute

Biotechnology Innovation Organization

California Cherry Export Association

Corn Refiners Association

CropLife America

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative

Grocery Manufacturers Association

International Dairy Foods Association

Meat Import Council of America

Midwest Food Products Association

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 Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Fisheries Institute  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Potato Council  
National Renderers Association  
National Sunflower Association  
National Turkey Federation  
North American Meat Institute  
Northwest Horticultural Council  
Pet Food Institute  
Sweetener Users Association  
Syngenta  
The Fertilizer Institute  
U. S. Grains Council  
U.S. Apple Association  
U.S. Hide, Skin and Leather Association  
U.S. Meat Export Federation  
U.S. Wheat Associates  
United Egg Producers  
United Fresh Produce Association  
US Canola Association

US Dry Bean Council

US Rice Producers Association

USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council

USA Poultry & Egg Export Council

USA Rice

Western Growers Association

WineAmerica