



March 20, 2018

Ambassador Gregg Doud
Chief Agricultural Negotiator
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Doud:

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative urges you oppose any tariff approach that could disrupt our long-standing trade relationships. In reaction to President Trump's recently imposed tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, we want to highlight the threat posed to our existing dairy exports caused by this position. Formed in 2010, Edge has nearly 800 dairy farmer members throughout the midwest and is the fastest growing dairy cooperative.

As you already know, exports are crucial to keeping our dairy community strong. Recent trade statistics show that U.S. dairy exports represent about one-seventh of total U.S. milk production. That works out to one day's worth of milk production every week. Our dairy farmers are concerned about the possible retaliatory measures our trading partners could impose that would limit our products' ability to reach consumers in other countries. If history is any indicator, agricultural products are often the first targeted.

Dairy farmers across the nation are experiencing a prolonged period of depressed milk prices. Foreign markets represent the best opportunity to address this challenge. We know that dairy products can help meet future protein demands from the rapidly growing global population. Our dairy farmers are ready to meet that demand, but first we need to maintain our existing markets. We already face uncertainty over our two largest markets - Canada and Mexico - because of the ongoing NAFTA negotiations. For that reason, Edge urges the Administration to successfully reauthorize a modernized NAFTA that does not disrupt the critical partnership that currently exists. We also support seeking improved access and new export opportunities in other foreign markets.

Edge appreciates your understanding and attention to our concerns. We appreciate that you have already been engaged on this issue. We hope you will remain engaged as necessary to safeguard our exports and protect our farmers.

Sincerely,

Brody Stapel
President