

April 1, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
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The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
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Ambassador Jamieson Greer
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
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The undersigned organizations wish to emphasize the necessity for a trade policy that supports the growth of American agricultural production and the prosperity of our farmers, ranchers, growers and rural Americans at this time of economic stress in agriculture. We appreciate the President's focus on achieving fairer trade for United States producers, workers, and industry.

Trade is critical to the livelihood of the U.S. agricultural sector because it spurs economic growth for our farmers, ranchers, growers and their rural communities, especially since 95% of the world's consumers live outside the borders of the United States. More than 20% of U.S. farm income is based on agricultural exports, and it is much higher for many commodities. Expanding opportunities for American crop and livestock producers to access international markets will boost farm income in the U.S., while preserving existing access is critical to maintaining a healthy agricultural economy. U.S. agricultural exports amounted to \$176 billion in 2024, and – historically – every \$1 of U.S. agricultural exports results in over \$2 in additional domestic economic activity. American agriculture is foundational to the American economy, reaching beyond farms and rural communities to support millions of jobs across the country.

Last year, the U.S. exported \$30 billion in agricultural products to Mexico, \$28 billion to Canada, and \$25 billion to China – our top three markets by value. Combined, these three countries account for nearly half of total agricultural exports. New tariffs levied against Canada, Mexico and China that result in trade retaliation will create financial hardships for U.S. farmers, ranchers, growers and agribusinesses who are already operating on very thin or negative margins and have not regained the market share lost during the last trade war. Our agricultural economy depends on these three markets. U.S. agriculture has already been impacted by steel, aluminum and other tariffs that have been imposed, and the looming threat of a renewed trade conflict with our top trading partners has the potential for long-term negative ramifications for American farmers, ranchers, growers and agribusinesses.

We support the administration's goal of increasing domestic security and ensuring fair trade with other nations, but additional tariffs on these nations' imports run the risk of significant retaliatory measures against U.S. agricultural exports, which have already been implemented by Canada and China. The impacts on American farmers and ranchers, growers, associated businesses and rural communities are critical when determining potential trade actions.

American agricultural exports have benefited greatly from the expansion of trade in recent decades. This also means that when the U.S. restricts trade through tariffs on other countries' products, American farm and ranch goods are often targeted for retaliatory tariffs or restrictive measures, putting farmers and rural communities on the front line of many trade disputes and jeopardizing American growers' access to

critical foreign markets. We urge the administration to quickly resolve these disputes to mitigate long-lasting negative impacts to American agriculture.

We support efforts to achieve trade agreements that remove barriers, tariff and non-tariff, and expand market access for U.S. agriculture. The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is scheduled for review in 2026 and preparations for this review are beginning. USMCA has been critical to the strong growth over four decades in agricultural and food trade in North America and we support this agreement. We also support engaging in trade discussions with the United Kingdom and India, and with other countries that hold the potential for economic growth and expanded market access for U.S. products.

The 2024 marketing year showed a food and agriculture trade deficit of \$32 billion, a stark contrast to the United States' historical trade surplus in agricultural exports, averaging \$12.5 billion over the past ten years. Two million U.S. farm and ranch families, along with thousands of rural jobs in the agriculture industry, are the backbone of America's food and agricultural sector. The impact of decreased exports and resulting economic fallout from the trade imbalance and retaliatory tariffs reverberates throughout the economy.

The administration's agricultural trade agenda must focus on maintaining existing markets, avoiding punitive tariffs that put farmers, ranchers and growers on the front line of retaliation, and an aggressive strategy that expands market access for U.S. agricultural products. By eliminating and reducing foreign tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, American producers will gain export market opportunities, leading to a stronger and wealthier America.

America's farmers, ranchers, growers, agribusinesses and rural communities are dependent on U.S. agriculture's competitiveness in the global marketplace. We stand ready to work with you and the President to achieve this outcome through the priorities we have outlined.

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Soybean Association
CropLife America
Farm Credit Council
International Fresh Produce Association
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Association
National Pork Producers Council
The Fertilizer Institute

cc: Kevin Hassett, National Economic Council Director