

September 20, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leaders Schumer and McConnell,

On behalf of the broad and diverse stakeholders in American Agriculture we represent, we urge you to work with your colleagues to expeditiously confirm Doug McKalip as Chief Agricultural Negotiator at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR).

We write with strong concern over further delay because we are reminded daily of the need for greater attention and emphasis from the Administration on agricultural export market growth. At the end of August, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) cut its Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 agricultural export forecast and presaged an agricultural trade deficit in FY 2023. The USDA raised the value of exports to \$196 billion but also increased the value of agricultural imports to \$192 billion, narrowing the agricultural trade surplus to just \$4 billion. USDA now forecasts lower agricultural exports for the next fiscal year and again has increased its import projection by another \$5 billion, taking a small trade surplus this year and moving into net deficit territory next year. Agricultural trade deficits, once unimaginable, are now reality, underscoring the need to have in place a Senate-confirmed negotiator dedicated to pushing for new agricultural markets and removing barriers to growth in existing ones.

Over a year has passed since the expiration of Trade Promotion Authority and with it the power to negotiate new, binding agreements to lower tariffs. The competitive landscape, as demonstrated by USDA's latest projections, is moving quickly, and away from the United States. More competitive export nations are negotiating new, long-term deals including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which entered into force in January. The 15-member trade block includes 10 Southeast Asian nations and their five largest trading partners, namely Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea. The United States has countered with the Indo Pacific Economic Framework, which is a promising step in the right direction, but the Biden Administration trade team needs more hands and voices to deliver upon its promise. Other new, bilateral opportunities for U.S. agricultural trade await in places like the United Kingdom, India, and Taiwan but their potential can only be realized with the meaningful contribution of the Chief Agricultural Negotiator.

Fortunately, President Biden has nominated a highly qualified professional in Doug McKalip for the position of Chief Agricultural Negotiator. If confirmed, McKalip would bring to the position decades of experience representing the interests of U.S. agriculture, having served in numerous leadership positions at USDA and the White House. The Senate Finance Committee recently recognized Doug's impeccable credentials, voting on September 7 to favorably report his nomination to the full Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support.

With the committee having done its work, we request that you work quickly and closely with all Senators to ensure the confirmation of Doug McKalip as soon as possible. We appreciate your consideration and stand ready to support you in any way we can.

Signed,

Aequor Inc
Agri Beef Co.
Agribusiness Association of Iowa
Agri-Mark Inc.
AgTrade Strategies LLC
Amcot
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Fruit and Vegetable Processors
and Growers Coalition
American Peanut Council
American Seed Trade Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Soybean Association
American Vanguard Corporation
Animal Health Institute
Associated Milk Producers, Inc.
Bayer
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health
California Dairies, Inc.
California Walnut Commission
Cayuga Milk Ingredients
Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural
Exports
CoBank
Colorado Dairy Farmers
Continental Dairy Facilities LLC

Corn Refiners Association
Corteva Agriscience
CropLife America
Dairy Farmers of America
DairyAmerica, Inc.
Darigold
Distilled Spirits Council of the United
States
Douglas Products
Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative
Farmers for Free Trade
Fernjo Farms
FMI - the Food Industry Association
Foremost Farms USA
Fresh Produce Association of the
Americas
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Grassland Dairy Products, Inc.
Growth Energy
Idaho Dairywomen's Association, Inc.
International Dairy Foods Association
International Ingredient Corporation
Land O'Lakes, Inc.
Leather and Hide Council of America
Leprino Foods
MCT Dairies, Inc.
MDVA Milk Producers
Meat Import Council of America

Michigan Milk Producers Association
Midwest Dairy Coalition
Milk Specialties Global
National Association of State
Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Sorghum Producers
National Turkey Federation
North American Export Grain Association
North American Meat Institute
North American Renderers Association
North Dakota Corn Growers Association
North Dakota Grain Growers Association
Northharvest Bean Growers Association
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives
Northwest Dairy Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
Nutrien
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association

Organic Produce Association
Pet Food Institute
Pinion
Reckitt - Mead Johnson Nutrition
Sartori Company
Smithfield Foods, Inc.
Sweetener Users Association
Syngenta
The Fertilizer Institute
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Durum Growers Association
U.S. Pea & Lentil Trade Association
U.S. Rice Producers Association
U.S. Wheat Associates
United Dairymen of Arizona
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
USA Rice
Walnut Ridge Dairy, LLC
Washington State Potato Commission
Western Growers
William Westman & Associates LLC
Wine Institute
World Perspectives, Inc.
Zoetis