April 11, 2025

Ambassador Jamieson Greer
United States Trade Representative
Executive Office of the President
600 17th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Greer,

We write with great concern about the impact of the Administration's reckless tariff agenda on our nation's farmers. Farmers not only have billions of dollars in commodities from last year waiting to be sold, but also have started spring planting and rely on stable markets for their planning. These farmers have made planting decisions and purchased key inputs such as seeds and fertilizer, selected crop insurance coverage, and even began marketing their expected production. Long before the President's across-the-board tariff announcement, millions of acres of fall-planted crops like winter wheat were already in the ground, and farmers already have enough uncertainty without tariffs adding more volatility.

We continue to hear from farmers and businesses across the agricultural supply chain who are bearing the brunt of the negative impacts of the global tariffs announced by President Trump on April 2, 2025, and earlier tariffs on Canada and Mexico. These actions and the resulting retaliation have injected further uncertainty into the farm economy and continue to rattle commodity markets. Heading into this year, farmers were already facing tightened margins resulting from declining commodity prices and heightened input costs. Many farmers are in a much worse position than they were heading into the 2018-2019 trade war and so are less equipped to withstand the impacts of continued volatility.

As farm organizations and economists have been warning for months, key trading partners will continue to retaliate against U.S. agricultural products as a result of President Trump's tariffs. For example, on April 3rd, China announced a 34 percent retaliatory tariff on all products from the U.S. A major export destination for U.S.-grown soybeans, futures prices dropped 34 cents on Friday, with an estimated loss in value of unsold 2024 soybeans of nearly $300 million. That Friday drop would also cost farmers nearly $1.4 billion on the 2025 crop. Cotton, another crop that is heavily reliant on exports followed a similar steep decline. Since then, volatility in the markets has continued as the Administration has continued to change the tariffs day-by-day and sometimes hour-by-hour. While the tariffs are currently 10 percent across-the-board for nearly all countries except China, this continued uncertainty is the last thing farmers need as they begin planting season.

Farmers are also continuing to experience the long-term implications of the 2018-2019 trade war when structural trade flows shifted to favor farmers in Brazil and Argentina. A prolonged trade war now with key trading partners will just further exacerbate those trade shifts. This market share that farmers are losing is the result of more than $15 billion in investments by both taxpayers and the farmers themselves through trade promotion programs over the last 50 years.

The direct economic impact and uncertainty on America's farmers stands to change the future of agricultural trade relationships for generations. As such, we request responses to the following questions:

- Did USTR perform any analysis on the impact of the across-the-board tariff policy on farmers prior to implementation? If so, please share that analysis with us.
    - What do you expect to be the short- and long-term impacts of tariffs on farmers?

- There have been conflicting reports as to whether tariffs are being used as leverage in trade negotiations or as a long-term structural shift in trade policy.
    - Can you provide clarity on the goals of the Administration's trade policy?
    - If tariffs are being used as leverage in trade negotiations, what are your top agriculture priorities and markets? What countries are you prioritizing in negotiations, and what is the basis for determining those countries?

- President Trump indicated that U.S. farmers need to get ready to supply the domestic market instead of the international markets.
    - Has USTR or have other agencies done analysis to show how production and consumption of crops would need to shift, or what domestic processing would be necessary to accomplish this goal? For example, there is very limited domestic cotton spinning, weaving or apparel manufacturing.
    - Significant parts of the agricultural trade imbalance are related to imports of specialty crops, many of which are either grown in tropical regions or imported during the off-season. U.S. farmers will not be able to produce these commodities in the same volume or season. Will consumers need to shift from fresh produce in the off season or be forced to pay a higher price due to the tariffs on these products?

- Prior to the announcement of the across-the-board tariffs and per-country rates, the USDA announced plans for trade missions to several countries including some with tariffs as high as 46%.
    - Did USTR consult with USDA on the trade missions or setting tariffs based on targets for opening markets?

We have serious concerns about the haphazard approach taken by the Administration to tariffs that cause unnecessary uncertainty and harm for U.S. farmers and their markets. We look forward to a prompt response.

Sincerely,

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Patty Murray
United States Senator

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator

Raphael Warnock
United States Senator

Peter Welch
United States Senator

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator

Angela Alsobrooks
United States Senator