

THE COALITION TO PROMOTE U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Andy Harris
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Harris,

We ask you and your committee colleagues to maintain funding in fiscal year 2023 for essential export promotion and market development funds provided by the Agricultural Trade Promotion and Facilitation programs. Specifically, we request at least \$200 million for the Market Access Program (MAP) and \$34.5 million for the Foreign Market Development (FMD) program. These modest investments, paired with full private-sector cost share, are invaluable as we race to reclaim global export markets shut off during the pandemic and diversify markets amid war and geopolitical unrest.

Following a multi-year trade conflict with China and uncertainty with our North American trading partners, American food and agricultural exporters have answered the challenge to diversify markets to decrease the reliance on any single market. Export growth to Myanmar, the Philippines, and to the Middle East as well as South America all demonstrate American exporters pursuit of new markets even in the face of tariffs leftover from our trade policy of the last three years. This pursuit occurs every day in the face of growing investment and new trade pacts made by international competitors.

This year, the European Commission allocated €185.9 million euros (\$210.6 million USD) for the promotion of European Union agri-food products both globally and in Europe. China's Belt and Road Initiative states, "We will actively pursue agricultural co-operation and development overseas, establish large-scale offshore centres for farm product production, processing, storage, and transportation, and cultivate internationally competitive multinational agricultural companies." And, in January, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership went into effect. This \$200 billion non-U.S. trade agreement among 15 Asia-Pacific member countries establishes the largest trade agreement in history, accounting for 30% of the world's population and 30% of the world's GDP.

At home, U.S. food and agriculture exporters continue to face real challenges. A recent forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Chief Economist noted that U.S. agricultural exports face economic

fallout associated with the Russian invasion of Ukraine and higher containerized shipping rates which make up more than 35% of the value of U.S. agricultural exports. Containerized agricultural exports are saddled with higher U.S.-to-Asia shipping rates and reduced carrier service for key export routes to Southeast and East Asia, with containerized shipment volumes down more than 20% over the second half of 2021. In the last two years container shipping costs have increased between 300-500% meaning lost export value, depending on the product, of 10-40%. Shipping cancellations and delays have cost over 20% in lost food and agricultural export sales.

Full funding of these programs ensures that we can continue to compete and that we don't miss a step moving forward. The success story of American food and agricultural exports continues even as the real dollar value of these programs has declined. MAP has been at the same funding level since 2006, and since that time, fully one-third of MAP funding has been lost to sequestration, inflation, and program administration. FMD hasn't had an increase in 19 years. Therefore, we are asking you and your colleagues to use discretionary funds to provide \$7 million – less than 3 percent of the program investment - for USDA administrative and operational costs to begin reversing this trend of diminished value. With administrative funding in place, the full investment of MAP and FMD can be realized for the intended purpose of U.S. agricultural export promotion and long-term market development.

We're thankful for your work and the work of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. Please continue the investment in these critically necessary programs.

Sincerely,

The Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural Exports (see attached)

cc: Members, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

The Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural Exports includes over 125 food and agricultural organizations across the nation spanning all segments of food and agriculture.

Organizations Signing Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural Exports Letter to House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute
Almond Alliance of California
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Cranberry Growers Association
American Feed Industry Association
American Hardwood Export Council
American Peanut Council
American Pistachio Growers
American Quarter Horse Association
America Seed Trade Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Soybean Association
APA-The Engineered Wood Association
Atlantic Seaboard Wine Association
Blue Diamond Growers
Brewers Association
California Agricultural Export Council
California Apple Commission
California Blueberry Association
California Blueberry Commission
California Canning Peach Association
California Cherry Export Association
California Citrus Mutual
California Date Commission
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Fig Advisory Board
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Pear Growers
California Prune Board
California Strawberry Commission
California Table Grape Commission
California Walnut Commission
California Wild Rice Advisory Board
Cape Cod Cranberry Growers' Association
Cherry Marketing Institute
CoBank
Cranberry Institute
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Florida Citrus Mutual
Florida Citrus Packers Association
Florida Department of Citrus
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association
Florida Peanut Producers Association
Florida Tomato Exchange
Food Export Association of the Midwest USA
Food Export USA – Northeast
Georgia Poultry Federation
Ginseng Board of Wisconsin
Global Food & Nutrition, Inc.
Hardwood Federation
Hop Growers of America, Inc.
Idaho Grain Producers Association
Illinois Corn Growers Association
Illinois Farm Bureau
Indian River Citrus League
International Fresh Produce Association
Kansas Livestock Association
Leather and Hide Council of America
Michigan Apple Association
Missouri Corn Growers Association
National Association of Egg Farmers
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 Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grange
National Hay Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
National Turkey Federation
Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association
New York Wine & Grape Foundation
North American Blueberry Council
North American Meat Institute
North American Renderers Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
Northwest Wine Coalition
Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers Association

Olive Growers Council of California
Oregon Winegrowers Association
Oregon Wine Board
Organic Trade Association
Pet Food Institute
Rural & Agriculture Council of America
Softwood Export Council
Southern Forest Products Association
Southern U.S. Trade Association
Sunkist Growers
Sunmaid Growers of California
Sunsweet Growers, Inc.
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
The Popcorn Institute
United Egg Producers
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
USA Rice
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Apple Export Council

U.S. Cattlemen's Association
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Dry Bean Council
U.S. Livestock Genetics Export
U.S. Meat Export Federation
U.S. Peanut Federation
U.S. Rice Producers Association
U.S. Wheat Associates
Valley Fig Growers
Washington Apple Commission
Washington Association of Wheat Growers
Washington State Fruit Commission
Washington State Potato Commission
Washington Winegrowers Association
Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association
Wine Institute
WineAmerica (The National Association of American Wineries)
Winegrape Growers of America
Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association