

July 15, 2013

Ambassador Mike Froman  
United State Trade Representative  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
600 17th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ambassador Froman and Secretary Vilsack:

The undersigned food and agricultural organizations and companies wish to congratulate Ambassador Froman on becoming United States Trade Representative. We greatly appreciate the view that both of you have expressed that trade can make an important contribution to America's economic recovery, and we are committed to working with you and your staffs to assist in the Administration's efforts to increase exports of U.S. goods and services and enforce the trade rights of U.S. producers and exporters.

With this in mind, we are attaching a Statement of Core Principles for a Successful TPP Agreement, which has been endorsed by groups representing the vast majority of U.S. producers, processors and exporters of food and agricultural goods. These principles are aimed at ensuring that the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations fulfill the promise of a high-quality agreement that can serve as a standard for future trade agreements.

We stand ready to discuss these with you at your earliest convenience, and we look forward to working with you and your trade policy teams in the coming weeks and months to ensure that the principles we have outlined are taken fully into account as the negotiations move forward with the full complement of participating nations.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Frozen Food Institute  
American Meat Institute  
American Peanut Product Manufacturers, Inc.  
American Sheep Industry Association  
American Soybean Association  
Animal Health Institute  
Blue Diamond Growers

Cargill, Incorporated  
Corn Refiners Association  
Grocery Manufacturers Association  
International Dairy Foods Association  
JBS USA  
Kraft Foods Group, Inc.  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
National Chicken Council  
National Confectioners Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Fisheries Institute  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Potato Council  
National Renderers Association  
National Turkey Federation  
North American Meat Association  
Northwest Horticultural Council  
Pet Food Institute  
Smithfield Foods  
Sweetener Users Association  
U.S. Apple Association  
U.S. Dairy Export Council  
U.S. Grains Council  
U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc.  
U.S. Meat Export Federation  
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council

Statement of Core Principles for a Successful TPP Agreement  
Agreed To By The  
Food and Agricultural Sector

*The undersigned organizations, representing the vast majority of the nation's producers, processors and exporters of food and agricultural products, and in being in support of a high quality trade agreement that can serve as the standard for all future trade agreements, hereby issue the following Statement of Core Principles for the TransPacific Partnership negotiations:*

One: A TPP agreement must cover all elements of trade and investment, including agriculture, goods, services, digital trade, competition policy, and intellectual property. TPP must be comprehensive.

Two: There must be no product or sector exclusions, including in agriculture. Exclusions would limit opportunities in each of the member countries to reach new markets, grow businesses and generate economic growth and jobs.

Three: All tariffs and other market access barriers must be phased out by the end of the negotiated transition period. Allowing any access restrictions to be maintained by one member would lead to demands for similar treatment by others leading to a second class trade agreement, at best. Transition periods must have commercially meaningful timeframes, which should be short and not back-loaded.

Four: Risk based scientific decision making, regulatory convergence, and equivalence are critically important. Comprehensive tariff elimination must be supported by robust SPS outcomes. Non-science based SPS measures cannot continue to restrict trade.

Five: A "Rapid Response Mechanism" (RRM) is needed in TPP to provide for shipment specific trade facilitative obligations that address frustration of trade in perishable and time sensitive shipments of agricultural products as result of implementation of SPS and TBT measures.

Six: Obligations that go beyond those in the WTO must be subject to TPP enforcement provisions, including in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary chapter. Since TPP members would not have recourse to WTO dispute settlement to enforce enhanced TPP disciplines, failure to include an enforcement mechanism would render new TPP disciplines valueless.

Seven: The agreement must be a single undertaking. All elements of the negotiation, including both tariff and nontariff SPS measures, are part of an indivisible package and cannot be agreed upon separately. In other words, nothing is finalized until everything is finalized.

*These principles do not cover all elements of the TPP negotiations. They are intended to affirm those that must be upheld for the final TPP agreement to be judged worthy of the full support of the undersigned groups. In some cases, organizations' support of a TPP containing these core elements also hinges on attainment of key sector-specific priorities not cited above.*