July 26, 2017

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We are encouraged by the Administration’s recent efforts to reopen the Chinese beef trade market, and are pleased you have made lifting the Chinese ban on U.S. poultry products one of your top priorities as Agriculture Secretary. In January 2015, China banned all poultry products from the United States due to the detection of a wild duck with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). More than two years later, China continues to enforce this ban, which is inconsistent with World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) standards. As a result, U.S. poultry producers have been negatively affected by the loss of this burgeoning export market.

The poultry industry provides thousands of high quality jobs in our rural communities and the reopening of the Chinese market would provide a huge boost for these rural areas. We encourage you to remain focused on the next steps to officially reopen the Chinese market as soon as possible. Expanding market access in growing regions in the Asia Pacific, especially China, is essential for our poultry producers and will result in the creation of new jobs and higher wages in rural communities. We are hopeful for a swift process and offer our strong support as you and your staff continue to work to reopen this critical export market for poultry produced in the United States.

We understand and are encouraged that China has begun its animal health audit of the U.S. poultry industry. Once this audit is completed, we encourage USDA to remain diligent in seeking final Chinese approval for U.S. poultry’s first successful shipment as quickly as possible. Poultry products are often part of the Chinese New Year celebrations, and our farmers would very much like to be able to offer their products during that time.

With the productivity of U.S. agriculture exceeding domestic demand, the U.S. food and agriculture industry—and the rural communities which depend on it—rely heavily on export markets to sustain prices and revenues. Poultry is produced in almost every state. For communities and states that rely on a thriving and growing poultry industry, these agreements are essential to a strong and vibrant future.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding the status of this important negotiation.
Sincerely,

Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

Thad Cochran  
United States Senator

Chris Coons  
United States Senator

Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator

Chuck Grassley  
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

Pat Roberts  
United States Senator

Tom Carper  
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator

John Cornyn  
United States Senator

Richard Burr  
United States Senator

John Thune  
United States Senator

Claire McCaskill  
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator
Roger Wicker
United States Senator

Roy Blunt
United States Senator

John Boozman
United States Senator

Michael S. Lee
United States Senator

Joe Donnelly
United States Senator

Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator

Tom Cotton
United States Senator

Al Franken
United States Senator

Jerry Moran
United States Senator

John Hoeven
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator

M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator
David Perdue
United States Senator

Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator

Todd Young
United States Senator

Richard C. Shelby
United States Senator

Thom Tillis
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Kamala Harris
United States Senator

Tim Scott
United States Senator

Luther Strange
United States Senator