

THE COALITION TO PROMOTE U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

March 29, 2023

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman,

We urge your support of S. 176, the Expanding Agricultural Exports Act of 2023 by including it in the Committee's reauthorization of the Farm Bill. This bipartisan legislation will double the investment made in the Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) at a time of tremendous need for both programs.

For more than 50 years, American agriculture exports have counted as a trade surplus and have endured as a source of national pride for farmers and ranchers feeding, fueling, and clothing the world. This positive trade balance is now in serious jeopardy. In February, USDA again cut its ag export forecast for fiscal year (FY) 2023 but kept their forecast for higher US agricultural imports intact, resulting in a growing trade deficit. USDA forecasts ag exports at \$184.5 billion vs imports of \$199 billion for a trade deficit of \$14.5 billion. This ominous projection has worsened since November when exports were pegged at \$190 billion against imports of \$199 billion.

Investments now in these proven, export promotion programs are immediate steps which can be taken to continue American agriculture's longer term success story in trade. According to USDA between 1977 and 2019, every dollar invested in these programs returned on average \$24.50 in annual export value. During the same period, these programs increased export revenue by \$9.6 billion annually and added \$12.2 billion to farm cash receipts.

These programs continue proving their value and are glowing examples of public-private partnerships with matching funds continuing to outpace government investment that hasn't increased since 2006. After inflation and mandatory budget cuts through sequestration, the real value of the MAP program is \$123.9 million, far less than the \$200 million authorized level. And the FMD program is \$19.3 million, not \$35 million as authorized. This diminished value is also the reason why we are urging action to

increase funding now, as part of the next Farm Bill. The U.S. is losing ground as other countries across the European Union and throughout Asia try to replicate the success of our export promotion programs by developing and investing in their own.

The outlook for ag trade is uncertain but we remain optimistic even without a clear, trade promotion policy in the near-term. We remain hopeful that the promise of new trade agreements, and new, market access opportunities will be realized in the future. In the meantime, support for MAP and FMD investment has never been more important. Please continue the legacy of success for these programs by investing in them as part of a new Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

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

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
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
Louisiana Cotton & Grain Association
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