

January 12, 2017

President-elect Donald J. Trump
725 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear President-elect Trump,

Congratulations on your successful campaign.

On behalf of the undersigned U.S. agriculture, trade, commerce-related businesses and associations, we urge you to continue to show your support for American agriculture by advancing the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba and building on the progress that has already been made.

Net farm income is down 46 percent from just three years ago, constituting the largest three-year drop since the start of the Great Depression. This strain on the farm economy is felt across all sectors of the industry and the thousands of small communities that make up rural America. The importance of trade to America's farmers and ranchers cannot be overstated. The share of U.S. agricultural production exported overseas is 20 percent by volume, with some sectors being much higher. For example, exports account for over 70 percent of U.S. production of tree nuts and cotton, over 60 percent of soybeans, and over 50 percent of rice and wheat. Positive farm income throughout America would not be possible without increasing access to foreign markets, like Cuba.

Mr. President-elect, as an international business icon, you understand how difficult it is to be competitive without the ability to extend credit to your customers. We need the Administration's support for legislation that would remove these arbitrary and archaic restrictions on extending credit for the purchase of agricultural commodities and equipment.

Your support in removing outdated financing and trade barriers for exporting agricultural products and equipment to our island neighbor could significantly strengthen a U.S. industry which supports 17 million jobs across the country, and can provide the Cuban people with high-quality American-grown food. Cuba imports nearly 80 percent of its food to feed a population of 11 million people and upwards of three million tourists annually. Cuba's \$2 billion agriculture import market could provide tremendous benefits for farmers across the country and help American agribusiness offset recent losses.

In addition to the size of the Cuban market, its proximity to U.S. ports allows for considerably lower shipping costs and shorter delivery times than our foreign

competitors. The logistical advantages alone should make Cuba a common-sense partner for two-way commerce. Instead, the federal government overreach has put American farmers at a global disadvantage. U.S. agriculture continues to lose out to our foreign competitors and our net sales have been steadily declining since 2009.

As result of trade restrictions, the U.S. has fallen from its position as the number one supplier of agricultural products from 2003 to 2012, to now the number five supplier after the European Union, Brazil, Argentina, and Vietnam. The U.S. needs to be number one again. Especially given many of Cuba's imports, including rice, poultry, dairy, soy, wheat, and corn make up more than 70 percent of what they import and they're all grown right here in the U.S. by hardworking American farmers.

As a broad cross-section of rural America, we urge you not to take steps to reverse progress made in normalizing relations with Cuba, and also solicit your support for the agricultural business sector to expand trade with Cuba to help American farmers and our associated industries. It's time to put the 17 million American jobs associated with agriculture ahead of a few hardline politicians in Washington.

We look forward to working closely with you and your team, and please let us know if we can provide any assistance moving forward.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Feed Industry Association

American Pulse Association

American Seed Trade Association

American Soybean Association

Corn Refiners Association

Independent Professional Seed Association

Livestock Exporters Association of the USA

National Association of Wheat Growers

National Barley Growers Association

National Corn Growers Association

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

National Farmers Union

National Foreign Trade Council

National Oilseed Processors Association

National Potato Council

National Turkey Federation

Navajo Agricultural Products Industry

North American Millers Association

Rural & Agriculture Council of America

U.S. Cattlemen's Association

U.S. Cava Exports

U.S. Dry Bean Council

U.S. Wheat Associates

USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council

USA Poultry & Egg Export Council

USA Rice

Agribusiness Organizations

AGCO

Amerex Corporation

Bibler Brothers Lumber and Construction

Campbell Farms

Carnes Farms, Inc.

Clark AG Company

Claxton Poultry

ETW Enterprises, Inc. Shavings & Rice Hulls

Falcon Rice Mill

Farmers Rice Milling Co.

Gulf Wise Commerce

Hormel Foods Corporation

Kennedy Rice Mill, LLC/Planters Rice Mill, LLC

Koenig Vineyards

Louisiana Rice Milling Company

Mannco Fertilizer

Martin Rice Company

Newcomb Farms

Poinsett Rice & Grain

Producers Rice Mill

Riceland Foods

RiceTec, Inc

Riviana Foods – American Rice, Inc

Sandy Ridge Cotton Company

Simmons Foods

Sturman's Smokeshop

Texas Rice Belt Warehouse, Inc

TRC Trading Corporation

State Organizations

Alabama Farmers Federation

Alabama Poultry Association

Argicultural Council of Arkansas

Arkansas Farm Bureau

Arkansas Rice Council

Arkansas Rice Federation

California Rice Commission

Central Louisiana Rice Growers Association

Colorado Farm Bureau

Colorado Pork Producers Council

Georgia Farm Bureau

Idaho Grain Producers Association

Idaho Potato Commission

Illinois Farm Bureau

Illinois Soybean Association

Illinois Soybean Growers

Iowa Corn Growers Association

Iowa Farm Bureau Federation

Iowa Institute for Cooperatives

Iowa Soybean Association

Kansas Association of Wheat Growers

Kansas Corn Growers Association

Kansas Farm Bureau

Kansas Livestock Association

Kansas Soybean Association

Kansas Wheat Commission

Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation

Louisiana Rice Growers Association

Louisiana Rice Producer's Group

Michigan Agri-Business Association

Michigan Bean Shippers

Michigan Soybean Association

Minnesota Barley Council

Minnesota Farm Bureau

Minnesota Farmers Union

Minnesota Grain and Feed Association

Minnesota Turkey Growers

Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation

Mississippi Poultry Association

Missouri Farm Bureau

New Mexico Cattle Growers Association

New Mexico Wine and Grape Growers Association

Northeast Louisiana Rice Growers Association

Ohio Agribusiness Association

Ohio Corn & Soy

Texas Farm Bureau

Texas Grain Sorghum Producers

Texas Rice Producers Legislative Group

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