

# 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