

September 27, 2024

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write representing a wide cross-section of the agricultural supply chain facing imminent and severe shipping disruptions due to rail embargoes impacting trade with Mexico, potential labor strikes at East and Gulf Coast ports, and historically low water levels on the Mississippi River. These disruptions will have a ripple effect across the entire United States. We urge your administration to take immediate action to mitigate these growing shipping challenges.

The agriculture industry relies on a three-legged stool to get products to market: trucking, rail, and water, including barges and ocean-going vessels. A balanced and efficient operation of all three is essential to moving our products throughout the United States, North America, and abroad.

Approximately 40 percent of U.S. containerized agricultural exports move through East and Gulf Coast ports. The negotiations between the International Longshoremen's Association and the United States Maritime Alliance are stalled and we request for you to bring the parties to the table, mediate a negotiation, and be prepared to step in should a strike or lockout occur to ensure port operations continue. If the parties are unable to reach a resolution before the current labor agreement expires on September 30, the impact on the supply chain will quickly reverberate throughout the agricultural economy, shutting down operations and potentially lowering farmgate prices. It is critical that the administration work with both parties to resume negotiations and avoid work stoppages at the ports. As ports prepare for a potential work stoppage, an emergency hours of service waiver from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for truck drivers at East and Gulf Coast ports would be helpful.

Compounding the agricultural shipping hurdles are significant rail challenges and Mexican imposed embargoes on U.S. agricultural shipments to Mexico, which dramatically slows two U.S. railroads from interchanging U.S. agricultural products with their Mexican rail partner. Mexico is our industry's largest export market for many commodities and in the past year alone, over \$30 billion worth of U.S. agricultural products have been exported to Mexico. However, limited access to this crucial market persists as North American trade growth has outpaced Mexican rail capacity. The rail challenges in Mexico are not confined and can extend to other agricultural rail shipments. Immediate support from the U.S. government is urgently needed to restore full trade access with Mexico for U.S. agriculture.

Further compounding the shipping crisis are weather-related issues such as low water levels in the inland waterways forcing barges to carry lighter loads, and expected

hurricanes that can potentially result in port closures in the southeast. To allow for more efficient navigation when there are low water levels we request the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers use its dredging capabilities to maintain 12-foot-deep channels on the lower Mississippi River.

A substantial portion of U.S. agriculture is experiencing lower commodities prices and financial strain, and these transportation issues are exacerbating the situation. We ask your administration to urgently pursue all avenues to mitigate the supply chain challenges facing U.S. agriculture. We thank you for your consideration and responsiveness.

Sincerely,

ACG Products
ADM
AgMark LLC
Agribusiness Association of Iowa
AgriBusiness Association of Kentucky
Agribusiness Council of Indiana
Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference
Agricultural Retailers Association
Agriculture Transportation Coalition- AgTC
Agri-Mark, Inc.
AgState
ALCIVIA
Alura Inc.
Amcot
American Chemistry Council
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Dairy Products Institute
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Foods Institute
AmericanHort
American Malting Barley Association
American Pulse Association
American Soybean Association
Arizona Grain, Inc
Arkansas Rice Federation
Asimetrix Inc.
Associated Milk Producers Inc.
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Attebury Grain, LLC
Barkery Inc.
Bocker Ruff Grain
California Grain and Feed Association

California Pork Producers Association
California Poultry Federation
California Seed Association
California Walnut Commission
Carolina Feed Industry Association
Cayuga Milk Ingredients
Central Missouri AGRIService LLC
Central Valley Ag
CHS
Colorado Pork Producers Council
Columbia Grain
CoMark Equity Alliance
Consolidated Grain and Barge
Consumer Brands Association
Corn Refiners Association
Cotton Growers Warehouse Association
Dairy Farmers of America
Darigold
D. E. Bondurant Grain Co. Inc.
dsm-firmenich
Extru-Tech, LLC
FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative
Florida Feed Association, Inc.
Forest Resources Association
Fornazor International Inc.
Fresh Produce Association of the Americas
FS GRAIN, LLC
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Grainland Farmers
Green Plains
GROWMARK, Inc.
Growth Energy
Hallway Feeds
Hamel Cooperative Grain Company
Hardwood Federation
Heritage Grain
High Desert Milk
HighLine Grain Growers
Hilmar Cheese Company
Illinois Pork Producers Association
Indiana Pork Producers Association
International Fresh Produce Association
International Ingredient Corporation
Iowa Pork Producers Association
James Farrell & Co.
Kansas Grain and Feed Association

Kansas Pork Association
Kentucky Pork Producers Association
Kentucky Soybean Association
Ladd Elevator Company
Lallemand Animal Nutrition
Leland Farmers Company
Ludlow Co-op Elevator Co.
Meat Institute
MFA Incorporated
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Michigan Agricultural Commodities
Michigan Bean Commission
Michigan Bean Shippers
Michigan Farm Bureau
Michigan Milk Producers Association
Michigan Pork Producers Association
Milk Specialties Global
Minnesota Pork Producers Association
MKC
MN AgriGrowth Council
Minnesota Barley Growers Association
Minnesota Grain and Feed Association
Missouri Agribusiness Association
Missouri Pork Association
Montana Pork Producers Council
Morrow County Grain Growers, Inc.
National Aquaculture Association
National Association of Landscape Professionals
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Cotton Council
National Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association
National Grain and Feed Association
National Grange
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Sorghum Producers
Nebraska Dry Pea & Lentil Commission
Nebraska Pork Producers Association
North American Renderers Association
Northharvest Bean Growers Association
North Carolina Pork Council

North Carolina Soybean Producers Association
North Dakota Agricultural Association
North Dakota Grain Dealers Association
Northeast Agribusinesses & Feed Alliance
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives
Northern Pulse Growers Association
Novonosis North America
Nugen,LLC
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Ohio Pork Council
Ohio Soybean Association
Oklahoma Grain & Feed Association
Oklahoma Pork Council
One Earth Energy, LLC
Oregon Feed & Grain Association
Pacific Coast Renderers Association
Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed Association
Pacific Seed Association
Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council
Pet Food Institute
POET
Prairie Central Cooperative
Premier Cooperative, Inc.
Premex Inc.
Primient
Producer Ag
RCM Co-op
Renewable Fuels Association
Riceland Foods
Rocky Mountain Agribusiness Association
Rocky Mountain Bean Dealers Association
Sartori Cheese
Scoular
Sorrells Farm Supply, Inc.
South Carolina Corn and Soybean Association
South Dakota Agri-Business Association
South Dakota Pulse Crops Commission
Southeastern Grain & Feed Association
Soy Transportation Coalition
Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance
StoneX
Texas Grain & Feed Association
Texas Pork Producers Association
The Andersons, Inc.
The DeLong Co.
The Fertilizer Institute

TN Feed & Grain Assn
Top Ag Cooperative
TransAgra International Inc.
Tri Central Coop
United Animal Health
United Farmers Cooperative
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
Ursa Farmers Cooperative
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice
U.S. Dairy Export Council
US Dry Bean Council
U.S. Grains Council
U.S. Meat Export Federation
US Pea & Lentil Trade Association
U.S. Peanut Federation
US Rice Producers Association
US Wheat Associates
Virginia Agribusiness Council
Virginia Pork Council
Virginia Soybean Association
Waterways Council Inc.
Western Grain Marketing
Wisconsin Agri-Business Association
Wisconsin Pork Association

CC:

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture
The Honorable Robert Primus, Chairman, Surface Transportation Board
The Honorable Julie Su, Acting Secretary, Department of Labor
The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary, Department of Transportation
General William Graham, Jr., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. House Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure