

March 2, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) support the introduction and enactment of Trade Promotion Authority legislation as quickly as possible. Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) is a critical piece in the effort to secure and pass balanced, well-negotiated trade agreements.

TPA legislation would be a vital step forward in strengthening Congress's role in strengthening Congress' role in trade negotiations. By having a clear framework through TPA for participating actively in the negotiating process, Congress increases its ability to influence the agreements as they are being written and to help craft a deal that will be beneficial for the United States. In this way, TPA plays a key part in supporting a strong trade policy agenda. That type of active trade policy agenda is particularly important to our industry in light of the fact that we are now exporting the equivalent of one day out of every week's milk production. Last year the U.S. dairy industry exported over \$7 billion last year, making trade vital to our industry's future.

At this stage of TPP, we have significant concerns regarding how critical elements of the TPP talks – particularly those related to dairy market access and the use of common food names – will ultimately be resolved in ongoing negotiations. Given the strong dairy export potential TPP could offer, it would do our companies and farmers a disservice to accept an agreement that could disproportionately increase imports while forgoing comparable export openings for the U.S.

Our goal is an agreement that on balance offers net trade benefits to the U.S. dairy industry. To get there, market access into the region's most protected dairy markets – Japan and Canada – is imperative. Our negotiators have worked extremely hard and moved the ball forward on key issues such as expanding access to the Japanese market and improving safeguards surrounding the use of common food names in the face of the EU's abuse of geographical indications to erect barriers to U.S. exports. However, Japan needs to do more; in particular it needs to provide avenues for U.S. export growth in all areas. Likewise, Canada has yet to put forward an offer on dairy. In order for TPP to be successful and truly comprehensive, it is imperative that Canada provide significant market openings for the full range of U.S. dairy products.

TPA support is not a blank check on TPP; TPP must be considered on its own merits. However, without TPA, we will not be able to seize the opportunities that well-negotiated agreements may ultimately present. That is why we urge Congress to move forward with TPA without delay and simultaneously actively engage in the final stages of TPP negotiations.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Suber
President
U.S. Dairy Export Council



James Mulhern
President & CEO
National Milk Producers Federation