

September 27, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington,
DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for your leadership as you work to strengthen U.S. bilateral relations with Mexico. We are grateful for your efforts to build more resilient supply chains in the United States and across North America. The undersigned organizations represent America's highly innovative and competitive food and agricultural value chain. Collectively, we represent a broad swath of the food and agriculture sector, accounting for roughly one-fifth of the country's economic activity and directly supporting over 21.5 million jobs – constituting 14% of total U.S. employment.

We are committed to working with you and your administration to ensure the availability of safe, accessible food for all consumers. The High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED) between the United States and Mexico provides an effective forum for promoting food security in our countries and tackling inflationary pressures. We strongly encourage you to make these critical issues a component of the HLED.

The HLED has fostered the foundation for significant progress in the advancement of the economic and commercial relationship between the U.S. and Mexico and has therefore contributed to the prosperity of North America. We applaud the strides taken by your administration in collaborating with Mexico on improving the bilateral business environment, spurring the creation of jobs and opportunities in Central America, strengthening protections in cybersecurity for supply chains, and supporting the training of a more inclusive workforce. These pillars, which have translated into key initiatives such as the Medical Device Regulatory Convergence project, the collaborative “Sowing Opportunities” framework, and the 2022 Academy for Women Entrepreneurs program, allow for a more prosperous economic environment that indirectly supports mutually beneficial agricultural trade.

Bilateral trade in agriculture products is significant and vital for both countries' economies. The United States ranks as Mexico's largest agricultural trading partner, purchasing 81% of Mexican exports and supplying nearly 70% of Mexico's imports. Mexico accounted for nearly 16% of U.S. agricultural exports and 22% of U.S. agricultural imports. In 2021, the agriculture trade relationship exceeded \$63 billion. Overall, U.S. agricultural exports supported 1,048,000 jobs and generated \$154.3 billion in additional economic activity (2020).

Farmers, ranchers, producers, and consumers in both countries benefit from expanded cross-border trade in agriculture products. Between 1993 (the year before NAFTA's implementation) and 2021, U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico expanded at a compound annual rate of 7.2%, while agricultural imports from Mexico grew at a rate of 9.7%. The complementary nature of U.S. - Mexico agricultural trade illustrates expanding agriculture market integration and the importance of policies that promote

sustainable and resilient food supply chains. More than three-fourths (77.2%) of U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico are grains, oilseeds, meat, dairy, and related products. Nearly three-fourths (74.3%) of U.S. agricultural imports from Mexico consist of vegetables, fruit, beverages, and distilled spirits.

Recent shocks to agriculture sectors and supply chains in both economies, including the global pandemic and market disruptions caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, illustrate the vital importance of resilient food and agriculture supply chains, essential to mitigating food insecurity. In the recent meeting you held with President López Obrador in Washington, D.C., food security was addressed, and Mexico and the U.S. emphasized the importance of facilitating bilateral trade and engaging in cooperative efforts to strengthen food security in North America.

As a follow-up to this important commitment, we strongly urge the U.S. government to engage Mexico in future HLED fora on the importance of resilient food and agriculture supply chains to address food security challenges in North America. This dialogue would be an important venue to share information on supply chain vulnerabilities, promote transparent and science-based risk assessment processes and other policies, discuss industry trends affecting availability of food, and identify areas of cooperation in times of potential food insecurity. These issues fall within the HLED Work Plan you identified last year, including “Building Back Together” through strengthening existing and new supply chains and promoting trade facilitation.

Mr. President, your leadership is critical. Our associations are ready to assist you and your administration in addressing challenges both countries face addressing food security and promoting integrated food and agriculture supply chains. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association
Animal Health Institute
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Corn Refiners Association
CropLife America
Fresh Produce Association of the Americas
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Leather and Hide Council of America
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
North American Meat Institute
North American Renderers Association
Sweetener Users Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Dairy Export Council
The U.S. Dry Bean Council
U.S. Grains Council
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council

Cc: The Honorable Gina Raimondo, Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce
The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
The Honorable Antony Blinken, Secretary, U.S. Department of State
The Honorable Katherine Tai, Ambassador, U.S. Trade Representative