

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

June 2, 2022

Dear President Biden,

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has put the issue of global food security at the center of the international trade agenda. We strongly condemn this invasion and support robust global action to help Ukrainian farmers quickly rebuild and resupply global food markets. The United States can contribute to the longer-term food security situation in part by working to strengthen multilateral trade rules on agriculture that promote resilient, adaptive, and innovative agricultural markets. In contrast, trade-distorting practices undermine agricultural trade and increase food insecurity, causing disproportionate harm to low-income consumers.

The undersigned organizations are concerned that this emergency situation could be exploited by some to undermine global food security at the upcoming 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). We strongly oppose proposals advanced by India and other WTO members that would lead to an unlimited allowance of trade distorting price supports tied to public stocks at MC12. This would render WTO rules on agricultural domestic support meaningless to the world's farmers while benefiting only a few developing countries.

Over the past decade, certain developing countries have made extensive use of the most production- and trade-distorting forms of subsidies (i.e., price supports and input subsidies) to increase the production of food commodities significantly. As a result, those countries now have massive government-controlled stocks tied up in programs that are subject to political manipulation. They have reshaped global agricultural production and trade flows by driving down prices in the rest of the world and depressing production, including in other developing countries. They have also resulted in resource degradation due to the heavy use of environmentally harmful types of crop production subsidies.

We urge you to oppose these proposed changes to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, which already provides criteria for the international sale or disposal of non-commercial stocks. Instead, we encourage countries to donate their excess stocks to the World Food Program, which has exemplary distribution and humanitarian programs to feed hungry people around the world. We also support the draft ministerial decision that would prohibit export restrictions for non-commercial sales to the World Food Program. Global food security is enhanced through the operation of predictable and market-based agricultural supply chains, and underpinned by a system of enforceable trade rules and openness to international trade.

Sincerely,

American Bakers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Peanut Council
American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association
Corn Refiners Association
CropLife America
International Dairy Foods Association
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Milk Producers Federation
North American Meat Institute
North American Millers' Association
Pet Food Institute
Sweetener Users Association
Texas Grain Sorghum Association
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Grains Council
U.S. Wheat Associates
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council
USA Rice

cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture; Ambassador Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative; Mr. Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor