

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

The Honorable Katherine Tai
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Tai,

We write to you regarding ongoing discussions between the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and the Government of India. As we work to remove trade barriers for U.S. agricultural exports, we request your assistance in remedying burdensome tariffs facing the pecan industry.

Pecans are significant contributors to rural economies across the 15 states where they are grown. In recent years, the domestic pecan industry has faced a myriad of issues, including rising import pressures and damaging weather events that have hindered the industry's ability to succeed. Previously, the U.S. was shipping 100 million pounds per year to trading partners in East Asia. Last year, the U.S. shipped only 38 million pounds of pecans to this region, a 62 percent decrease. In addition, shipments to trading partners in East Asia from Mexico and South Africa have made the international market increasingly competitive. Recent increases in the costs of production have only underscored the need to expand export markets for the domestic pecan industry.

The U.S. pecan industry faces an excessively high tariff of 100 percent when exporting to India. Demand for tree nuts continues to grow in India, and high tariffs mean that the pecan industry is not able to participate in this booming market. India's principal goal of the pecan tariff is revenue, but the high tariff has resulted in few imports and consequently little revenue for the country. Eliminating the tariff or, at a minimum, reducing the tariff to the level of other tree nuts, would simultaneously raise tariff revenues for India and increase U.S. imports, resulting in a mutually beneficial situation for both countries.

Expanding export market opportunities is key to the future of the pecan industry, and we are committed to working with you in support of this goal. On behalf of the pecan industry stakeholders in our states, we appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



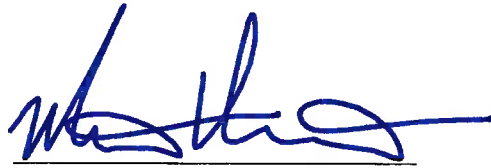
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