

March 9, 2023

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As organizations representing America's highly innovative and competitive food and agricultural value chain, we write to express our thanks for USTR's announcement that it will begin technical consultations with Mexico concerning its action to ban imports of biotech corn.

We are disappointed that Mexico's revised decree maintains policies related to agricultural technology, innovation and trade that are out of step with its commitments under the United States – Mexico – Canada Agreement (USMCA). As such, we support your administration's request for consultations with Mexico regarding its treatment of agricultural biotechnology and denying the use of certain crop protection tools, to provide a framework and timeline to resolve this issue. We look forward to these consultations beginning promptly.

We appreciate the efforts of your administration to resolve this issue through negotiations, and Mexico's efforts to narrow the scope of U.S. concerns. However, it is important to note that Mexico's new decree issued on February 13, 2023, continues to limit the use of innovative agricultural tools, extends restrictions on safe crop protection products, and enacts barriers to trade. The new decree is inconsistent with USMCA obligations and fails to establish a science- and risk-based regulatory approval process for all agricultural biotechnology products and ignores the immediate need to establish a risk assessment process for gene editing technology. Without material scientific justification, the new decree draws a safety distinction between corn used for food and corn used for feed and industrial uses.

As your Executive Order on Advancing Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing Innovation for a Sustainable, Safe, and Secure American Bioeconomy rightly noted, biotechnology is critical to achieve our climate goals, improve food security and sustainability, secure our supply chains, and grow the economy across all of America. Accomplishing these goals will require the U.S. government to address acute and systemic barriers that prevent growers from accessing innovative biotechnology.

The United States must use the dispute mechanisms afforded in trade agreements like the USMCA to ensure trade barriers or domestic policies do not limit the tools U.S. farmers have to sustainably produce food for our ever-growing world population. Sending a strong signal on enforcement will serve as a critical precedent for other trading partners.

Mr. President, we support your administration's enforcement of a rules-based trading system for agricultural innovation and your efforts to stand up for American farmers, developers, traders, processors, manufacturers, and retailers.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness Council of Indiana
Alabama Soybean and Corn Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Seed Trade Association
Arizona Bioindustry Association, Inc. (AZBio)
Association of American Railroads
Biocom California
BioKansas
Bio Nebraska
BioNJ
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Center for Global Health Innovation: Georgia Bio
Corn Growers Association of North Carolina
Corn Refiners Association
CropLife America
FMI – The Food Industry Association
Georgia Corn Growers Association
Idaho Technology Council
Illinois Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Illinois Corn Growers Association
Indiana Corn Growers Association
Indiana Health Industry Forum
INDUNIV Research Center, Inc. – Bioscience Cluster Puerto Rico
Iowa Corn Growers Association
Iowa Farm Bureau
Kansas Corn Growers Association
Kentucky Corn Growers Association
Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation
Michigan Biosciences Industry Association (MichBio)
Michigan Corn Growers Association
Minnesota Corn Growers Association
Missouri Corn Growers Association
Missouri Farm Bureau
Montana Bioscience Association
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
Nebraska Corn Growers Association
New Mexico Biotechnology & Biomedical Association (NMBio)
New York BIO
New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association
North American Meat Institute
North American Millers' Association
North Dakota Corn Growers Association
Northeast Agribusiness & Feed Alliance, Inc.
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association
Pennsylvania Corn Growers Association
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
South Carolina Corn and Soybean Association
South Dakota Agri-Business Association
South Dakota Biotech
South Dakota Corn Growers Association
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
Texas Corn Producers Association
Texas Grain and Feed Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Grains Council
Virginia Farm Bureau
Waterways Council Inc.
Wisconsin Agri-Business Association
Wisconsin Corn Growers Association
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation

cc: Ambassador Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative
Secretary Tom Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture