



FARMERS *for* FREE TRADE

December 3, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, Leader Schumer:

On behalf of America's 2.5 million farmers and all Americans involved in the food and agriculture supply chains -- we are writing to urge you to quickly pass the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) signed by the three countries' leaders more than six months ago.

Each day without action on USMCA is another day of uncertainty for American farmers and our rural communities.

Each year, U.S. food and ag industries export \$20.5 billion in goods to Canada and \$18.6 billion to Mexico. Those dollars are what keep our farms and manufacturing facilities open. Those dollars are the backbone of our rural communities supporting Main Street USA.

Today, however, farmers as well as food and ag businesses are struggling. The combination of record low prices, devastating weather episodes and uncertain markets have had a dramatic impact on our families, our friends and neighbors. Our communities are facing a significant increase in farm bankruptcies that ripple through the food and ag supply chains and hurt main street businesses throughout rural America.

Uncertainty in trade has had a major impact on U.S. agriculture. We have suffered from retaliatory tariffs, lost market share, and watched while America's competitors are seen as more reliable trading partners. The reasons for this crisis are manifold but providing certainty about continued trade with two of our three largest export markets would provide America's farmers and food manufacturers with a needed boost.

Simply put, U.S. farmers and food and ag businesses need a win – now more than ever.

We have a rare opportunity to bring Congress together to quickly help U.S. food and ag; North American trade is an area where we know both parties can cooperate. The USMCA builds on the success of NAFTA and modernizes and updates that agreement with important provisions that support U.S. agriculture, manufacturing, and services as well as drive American innovation and

competitiveness. With both Mexico and Canada moving to implement the trade deal, it is time for the U.S. Congress to engage and adopt this agreement.

Ratifying USMCA is a top priority for the nation's agriculture community. We look forward to action from both parties in the House and the Senate and are asking that you work together to pass the USMCA as soon as possible. We are counting on our elected officials to champion the folks back home and appreciate your urgent action.