

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 11, 2012

Ambassador Ron Kirk
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ambassador Kirk,

We respectfully request that you continue to press Mexico to uphold their existing treaty obligations to the United States in respect to the importation of U.S. potatoes.

Mexico currently prohibits fresh U.S. potatoes beyond a 26-kilometer zone from the U.S.-Mexico border due to Mexican claims that U.S. potatoes pose a pest risk. However, a Pest Risk Assessment conducted last year by Mexico found that potatoes grown in Mexico have a very similar pest profile to those grown in the U.S. Under existing treaty agreements, Mexico is required to treat U.S. potatoes the same as potatoes grown domestically. While the U.S. and Mexico signed a market access agreement that would have opened up all of Mexico to fresh U.S. potato exports by 2005, regrettably, they have failed to live up to this agreement. Following a mediation process conducted last year, Mexico continues to demonstrate its reluctance for a science-based mitigation plan.

The continued inaction by the Mexican government is costing U.S. growers significantly. In 2010, fresh potato exports from the United States to the 26-kilometer zone in Mexico were valued at \$35.3 million. If this arbitrary boundary was lifted and Mexico's treaty obligations were honored, conservative industry estimates suggest that U.S. fresh potato exports to Mexico would have already reached \$150 million per year.

U.S. growers have proven time and again that they can be very successful in competing in the international marketplace when they have a level playing field with their foreign competitors. In Fiscal Year 2011, agriculture exports generated \$137.4 billion for our nation's economy. It is estimated that every billion dollars in agricultural exports creates 8,000 jobs.

However, in order for the success of our growers to continue, the United States must hold our trading partners accountable for violations to international trade laws. We understand that Mexico has submitted a request to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations. As you consider Mexico's request, we respectfully encourage you to continue to press Mexico to uphold

their existing treaty obligations with the United States and develop a policy governing the importation of U.S. fresh potatoes that is based on science. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



SCOTT TIPTON
Member of Congress



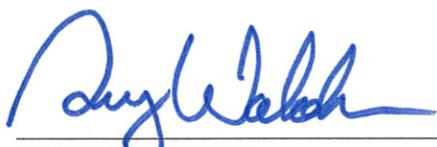
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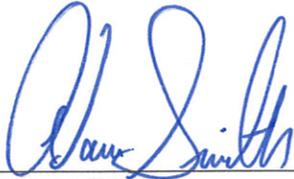
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