



U.S. Agriculture Supports **The U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement**

Dear Member of Congress:

We, the undersigned organizations and businesses, representing U.S. farmers, ranchers, food processors, agri-businesses and exporters, wish to express our appreciation to members of the House and Senate for the recent approval of the Peru Trade Promotion Agreement. Our economy, workers and farmers will profit from the agreement. This is equally true of the Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA), and we urge you to take up the Colombia TPA as soon as possible.

The Colombia and Peru trade agreements are nearly identical and have been skillfully negotiated on behalf of U.S. agriculture. Many U.S. food and agricultural products will become eligible for duty-free treatment immediately upon entry into force of the agreement, and the remainder will receive duty-free treatment upon full implementation. Under the Colombia TPA, U.S. beef, cotton, wheat, soybeans, soybean meal, apples, pears, peaches, cherries and many processed food products will receive immediate duty-free treatment, while corn, poultry, fruits and vegetables and dairy products will benefit immediately from improved market access.

“While 90 percent of Colombian products currently shipped to the United States are free from tariffs, most U.S. exports face significant tariffs or other restrictions in Colombia.”

The TPA will correct an inequity that exists between U.S. exporters of agricultural and industrial products and Colombian exporters. While 90 percent of Colombian products currently shipped to the United States are free from tariffs, most U.S. exports face significant tariffs or other restrictions in Colombia. This inequity is due in part to the Andean Trade Preference and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA), which Congress recently extended by an overwhelming majority. Passage of the Colombia TPA is the only way to resolve this inequity and “level the playing field” in our trade relations with Colombia.

The agreement will strengthen our economic ties with and promote greater political stability in Colombia, benefiting our two nations and the hemisphere. Colombia’s government is on the right track on labor and other issues, and its people support this trade agreement. They clearly recognize that any trade deal must provide economic benefits to the United States or it cannot gain political approval. Colombians also understand that by providing more open access to their market, they are solidifying our bilateral relationship and their own prosperity.

“The agreement will strengthen our economic ties with and promote greater political stability in Colombia, benefiting our two nations and the hemisphere.”

As a strong ally, Colombia deserves our continued economic and political backing. This can be demonstrated by Congress taking up and passing the Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement implementing legislation as soon as possible in 2008.

Sincerely,

*American Cotton Shippers Association • American Farm Bureau Federation • American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Food Institute • American Meat Institute • American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association • Blue Diamond Growers • California Table Grape Commission
Commodity Markets Council • Corn Refiners Association • Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Grocery Manufacturers Association • National Association of Wheat Growers • National Barley Growers Association
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association • National Chicken Council • National Confectioners Association
National Corn Growers Association • National Cotton Council • National Cottonseed Products Association
National Grain and Feed Association • National Grange • National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council • National Potato Council • National Turkey Federation
North American Equipment Dealers Association • North American Millers’ Association
Northwest Horticultural Council • Pet Food Institute • Produce Marketing Association
Sweetener Users Association • The North American Export Grain Association • U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Wheat Associates • United Egg Association • United Egg Producers
United States Hide, Skin and Leather Association • USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council • USA Rice Federation • Western Growers Association*