



September 24, 2007

The Honorable Diana Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: **IN SUPPORT OF U.S.-PERU TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT**

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing to you on behalf of my company, APL Limited.

We strongly support the United States - Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA) and we urge Congress to approve the implementing legislation for this important agreement at the soonest possible opportunity.

The United States - Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA) is currently awaiting to be schedule for vote probably this fall. With a critical vote on the bipartisan agreement scheduled to occur in the next few weeks, we urge you to consider the following facts:

If the PTPA is not approved, millions of dollars in U.S.-Peru trade in asparagus and other Andean crops, as well as thousands of jobs in Peru, could be lost. Furthermore, if access to these important imports is reduced or eliminated because of the delay on the PTPA approval, the persons that will suffer the most are U.S. consumers.

The value chain in the asparagus trade stands at approximately \$300 million. It is important to note that nearly 70% of the dollars involved in this value chain benefits U.S.-based interests, including: air, sea, and land carriers; importers; ports; storage facilities; distributors; wholesalers; and retailers. These activities generate significant employment opportunities for U.S. workers over a large stretch of this country and across numerous economic sectors.

Furthermore, of the roughly 30% of this value chain that remains in Peruvian hands, a large portion is invested in U.S. inputs including:

- Asparagus seeds purchased from U.S. suppliers such as California Asparagus Seeds; Stacy Seeds; and Jacobs Malcolm and Burtt;
- Glass jars used in canned asparagus by local branch of Ohio-based Owens Illinois; and
- Fertilizers (Peruvian agriculture utilizes approximately \$40 million worth of U.S. fertilizers).

Peruvian asparagus imports are largely counterseasonal to U.S.-grown asparagus, with 85% of the imports occurring between August and January, when U.S. production is minimal or nonexistent. Indeed, asparagus from Peru is essential for meeting U.S. demand; it complements, rather than competes against, U.S. production.

Due to the year round availability of asparagus on U.S. supermarket shelves owing to high-quality supply from Peru, consumption of this valuable U.S. dietary staple has increased, benefiting domestic producers as well. Asparagus imports from Peru have in fact become the proverbial "rising tide that lifts all boats."

In the absence of the passage of the PTPA in the U.S. Congress, the signatory located in Oakland, CA, and the 31 other members from the Peruvian Asparagus Importers Association – PAIA, located in 6 American States have no long term stability for their business, and no predictability no make investments.

In addition, over 600,000 jobs in Peru that depend on the asparagus and agroexport industry could be at stake. As such, this vital industry which has matured due to the benefits provided under the preferential treatment has been critical in contributing to Peru's economic boom in recent years, and providing legal and irreplaceable employment alternatives to narcotrafficking.

Finally, the approval of the PTPA would also be an effective tool for providing support to Peru in light of the recent earthquake which occurred precisely in the main asparagus and agroexport production areas south of Lima that have benefitted from the ATPDEA and will benefit from the PTPA. This seismic event resulted in hundreds of deaths and up to 70% destruction of cities such as Pisco.

Best Regards,



Vincent Rankin, Director, Refrigerated Sales, North America

Member of the Peruvian Asparagus Importers Association – PAIA