

April 27, 2021

Ambassador Katherine Tai
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Tai,

We read with interest your April 15, 2021, remarks on *Trade Policy, the Environment and Climate Change*. Of special note was your statement that “climate-friendly and sustainable agricultural production is essential to meeting our climate and sustainability goals.” And that, “our farmers and ranchers can lead the world with innovative carbon conservation practices.”

As an industry, agriculture does not always get the recognition it deserves for the practices already put in place, but we continue to be committed to improving production practices to reduce our impact on the environment. This has become more valuable than ever as supply chain partners field questions from consumers who are increasingly interested in helping the environment; as the United States enters into climate agreements with global partners to reduce GHG emissions; and as the data and technologies to help reduce emissions and sequester carbon become better and more accessible. How we manage the convergence of these factors will shape our effectiveness in mitigating our collective impact on the climate.

Farmers have come a long way in learning how to maximize carbon sequestration—practices such as reduced tillage and precision agriculture techniques result in storing more carbon in our fields over long periods. These insights have helped our industry understand how to better manage carbon and water to ensure long-term sustainability. We agree there are additional practices that farmers can adopt, including expanded use of cover crops. With good information and the correct incentives, farmers will achieve even better environmental outcomes.

We support voluntary, market- and incentive-based policies; advancing science-based outcomes; and providing help so that rural economies can better adapt to climate change. Farmers know that a changing environment will impact their operations and will require a sharpened focus on climate resiliency. There is a growing realization that if done correctly, public policies that promote these practices can also help boost farm income while making a tremendous contribution to reducing GHG emissions.

While you discuss the convergence of trade and the environment with your international counterparts, we look forward to engaging further with you and your staff regarding the great strides the U.S. agriculture industry has made, and continues to make, toward environmental sustainability and climate goals.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association
CropLife America
Farm Credit Council
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
USA Rice
U.S. Dairy Export Council