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## **Congress Seeks a Positive Market-Access Outcome for U.S. Dairy in Pacific Trade Pact**

### ***Letter to Trade Negotiators Clarifies that More Progress Must be Made in Dairy Talks***

The dairy industry today praised the more than 75 House members who have urged the Obama Administration to negotiate a strong market-access outcome for the U.S. dairy industry in the Pacific Rim trade agreement.

Led by the co-chairs of the Congressional Dairy Farmer Caucus, the House members sent a bipartisan letter to U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, saying Canadian and Japanese dairy market barriers must be addressed in any final Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement to allow more U.S. dairy exports. The TPP involves trade negotiations between the United States and 11 other nations.

“We recognize that you must juggle a wide range of priorities,” the congressmen said in the letter. “However . . . we believe that winning an overall positive market access result for the U.S. dairy industry is critical to the success of the TPP negotiations.”

The National Milk Producers Federation, the U.S. Dairy Export Council and the International Dairy Foods Association commended the House members’ action, noting that dairy producers and processors agree on the importance of a balanced, positive TPP market-access outcome for their industry.

“The U.S. dairy industry has a \$4 billion trade surplus worldwide and supports tens of thousands of jobs here at home, yet we still face substantial hurdles in major markets,” said Tom Suber, USDEC president. “TPP should expand our ability to compete through new access and more fair rules of trade.”



“The U.S. cannot give a pass to major countries like Canada and Japan while at the same time increasing access for major competitors into our own market. That is completely unacceptable,” said Jim Mulhern, NMPF president and CEO. “Given that TPP is likely to introduce more competition in a number of key markets, the bottom line is that this agreement must result in a net boost in export opportunities for U.S. dairy producers.”

Connie Tipton, IDFA president and CEO, added, “Significant market access for all dairy products must be on the table in negotiations with Japan and Canada. If this is to be a true 21st century trade agreement, U.S. dairy exporters should not be limited on what they sell into these markets.”

A majority of the House members signing the letter have voted in support of at least one of the U.S. free trade agreements approved in 2011, which are the most recent to date. Spearheading the letter were the Congressional Dairy Farmer Caucus co-Chairs: Reid Ribble (R-WI), Peter Welch (D-VT), Joe Courtney (D-CT), Suzan DelBene (D-WA), Tom Reed (R-NY), Mike Simpson (R-ID), David Valadao (R-CA) and Timothy Walz (D-MN). Read the letter [here](#).

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The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), based in Arlington, Va., develops and carries out policies that advance the well-being of U.S. dairy producers and the cooperatives they collectively own. The members of NMPF's cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of nearly 32,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more on NMPF's activities, visit [www.nmpf.org](http://www.nmpf.org).

The U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) is a non-profit, independent membership organization that represents the global trade interests of U.S. dairy producers, proprietary processors and cooperatives, ingredient suppliers and export traders. Its mission is to enhance U.S. global competitiveness and assist the U.S. industry to increase its global dairy ingredient sales and exports of U.S. dairy products. USDEC accomplishes this through programs in market development that build global demand for U.S. dairy products, resolve market access barriers and advance industry trade policy goals. USDEC is supported by staff across the United States and overseas in Mexico, South America, Asia, Middle East and Europe. The U.S. Dairy Export Council prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, disability, national origin, race, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs, marital status, military status, and arrest or conviction record.

The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Washington, D.C, represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industries and their suppliers, with a membership of 550 companies within a \$125-billion a year industry. IDFA is composed of three constituent organizations: the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF), the National Cheese Institute (NCI) and the International Ice Cream Association (IICA). IDFA's nearly 200 dairy processing members run nearly 600 plant operations, and range from large multi-national organizations to single-plant companies. Together they represent more than 85 percent of the milk, cultured products, cheese, ice cream and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States. IDFA can be found online at [www.idfa.org](http://www.idfa.org).