



International Dairy Foods Association
Milk Industry Foundation
National Cheese Institute
International Ice Cream Association



June 1, 2010

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Ron Kirk
United States Trade Representative
Office of the President
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Ambassador Kirk,

The U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC), National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) greatly appreciate the work devoted by USTR and USDA towards resolution of the health certificate for U.S. dairy product exports to China. In particular, we were gratified to see the dedication shown by Under Secretary Miller and Ambassador Siddiqui to this issue as evidenced by their actions last week to respond in person to Chinese statements regarding this issue made during the JCCT Agricultural Working Group meeting.

Although we welcomed the positive indications for the prospect of resolution sent yesterday by China, our industry remains deeply concerned by the uncertain situation facing U.S. food-grade dairy exports to China. This situation poses a very serious challenge to our industry at a fragile time in the recovery of the U.S. dairy market, while also putting at risk significant recent and future opportunities in a rapidly growing market.

We realize that USDA and USTR recognize that this issue is of the utmost concern. We respectfully request heightened efforts by USDA and USTR to provide a response to China based on its most recent communications regarding the certificate and to secure quickly the technical discussions that have been requested of the Chinese on this issue and which are fundamentally necessary to obtain agreement on new certificate language. As is the case in this situation, we frequently find ourselves at a disadvantage to our major competitors because they tend to work more swiftly to resolve their concerns in a manner that is satisfactory to both parties in order to prevent trade from ever stopping. Our industry believes that, given the examples of other certificates currently accepted by China, a path forward based on international agreed benchmarks is possible and could achieve resolution of this situation which currently threatens tens of millions of dollars worth of U.S. exports.

We thank you for your attention to this issue of paramount importance to the current sales and future growth of the U.S. dairy industry. In the near future, we would like to meet with you and members of your teams to discuss how the relevant agencies, including regulatory staff at APHIS, AMS and FDA, can build upon efforts to work together to support the goal of swift resolution of these challenging barriers that are becoming unfortunately more common.

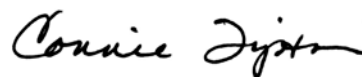
Sincerely,



Thomas M. Suber
President
U.S. Dairy Export Council



Jerry Kozak
President & CEO
National Milk Producers Federation



Connie Tipton
President & CEO
International Dairy Foods Association

cc: Chief Agricultural Negotiator Islam Siddiqui
Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Jim Miller
Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Edward Avalos
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Administrator Cindy Smith