



December 3, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
H – 232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
S – 230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
H – 204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Minority Leader
S – 221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of America's dairy producers and processors, we write to express our alarm that the U.S. is now potentially only weeks away from the imposition of retaliatory tariffs by Canada and Mexico on U.S. exports due to the World Trade Organization's finding that certain provisions in the U.S. Country of Origin Labeling law (COOL) are not WTO-compliant. The National Milk Producers Federation and U.S. Dairy Export Council urge Congress to act this month to bring the U.S. into compliance with its WTO obligations in order to head off this significant threat to U.S. dairy exports.

Retaliation against dairy products would come at a particularly harmful time for our industry, given the currently depressed global dairy market which makes sustaining exports in reliable markets all the more critical. On the farmer side of the industry, multiple cooperatives have already been faced at times this year with oversupplies of milk, causing them to dispose of excess milk at a loss. Retaliatory tariffs would back up exports further onto the U.S. market during this time of overly abundant milk supply.

It is critical that Congress resolve this challenge in the end of year spending legislation in a way that Canada and Mexico agree sufficiently addresses their concerns in order to remove the threat of retaliatory tariffs and preserve existing trade flows. U.S. dairy producers and processors cannot risk losing this opportunity to avoid considerable damage to the export markets our industry has so painstakingly developed.

Sincerely,

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

James Mulhern
President & CEO
National Milk Producers Federation



cc: Senate Committee on Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran
Senate Committee on Appropriations Ranking Member Barbara Mikulski
House Committee on Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations Ranking Member Nita Lowey