



September 19, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Re: ***Ratification of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement in 2019***

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, Schumer, and McCarthy:

The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is a vital trade agreement for the U.S. food and agriculture industry. Last year, food and agriculture exports to Canada and Mexico were valued at close to \$45 billion.¹ The USMCA will further enhance export opportunities by increasing market access for U.S. products and modernizing trade standards. That is why National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) members recently passed a [resolution](#) urging Congress to approve the USMCA in 2019.

NASDA represents the Commissioners, Secretaries, and Directors of the state departments of agriculture in all fifty states and four U.S. territories. Given the important role exports play in ensuring a prosperous agriculture sector, promoting exports and increasing international trade is a top priority for NASDA members. Ratifying the USMCA in 2019 will help advance this critical mission, benefiting agricultural producers and agribusinesses in every state.²

NASDA supports the ongoing dialogue between the House Democratic Working Group and the Office of the United States Trade Representative on potential changes to the USMCA. The desire for a strong, enforceable trade agreement that attracts bipartisan support is widely shared. However, time is of the essence. U.S. farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses are facing uncertainty in the global marketplace

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2019). *Global Agricultural Trade System*. Available from <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/gats/>

² For a state-by-state overview of USMCA impacts, please visit: <https://www.nasda.org/policy/issues/marketing-trade/international-trade-and-promotion/u-s-mexico-canada-trade-agreement/usmca-state-fact-sheets>

and a weak farm economy. Congress can provide a much-needed boost to agricultural producers and rural communities by bringing the USMCA into force this year.

The benefits of such a move will be felt across the economy. The International Trade Commission estimates that the USMCA will raise overall GDP by over \$68 billion.³ It is also important to note that increased agriculture exports induce positive economic effects in other sectors. When industries such as transportation are considered, U.S. agriculture exports support more than one million American jobs.⁴

The USMCA builds on 25 years of successful food and agriculture trade with Canada and Mexico, our closest neighbors and trading partners. Increased market access, streamlined customs procedures, and enhanced standards for biotechnology are just a few of the improvements found in USMCA. NASDA stands ready to work with Congress to continue enhancing our trading relationships around the world. A vote to approve the USMCA in 2019 would be the best place to start.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara P. Glenn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara P. Glenn, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

³ U.S. International Trade Commission. (2019). *United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement: Likely Impact on the U.S. Economy and Specific Industry Sectors*.

⁴ Persaud, S. (2019). *U.S. Agricultural Exports Supported 1.2 Million Full-Time Jobs in 2017*. Available from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/agricultural-trade-multipliers/>.