

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Jamieson Greer
U.S. Trade Representative
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Lutnick, Secretary Rollins, and Ambassador Greer:

On behalf of America's food growers, agricultural manufacturers, processors, and producers, we thank you for your leadership in advancing our country's economic and national security interests. We appreciate your continued commitment to an *America First* policy that prioritizes American workers, families, and industries.

As organizations representing every link in the American agriculture and food value chain—from farmers and ranchers to packagers and processors—we share your values and vision for a competitive, resilient American economy backed by enforceable and fair global trade rules. Our ability to grow and deliver abundant, affordable, healthy, and safe food to American consumers and families—and to global markets—depends on a stable and strong trade policy and reliable access to critical inputs.

It is in that spirit that we write to express concern about the unintended economic consequences of certain tariffs on essential agricultural inputs and infrastructure. Tariffs on aluminum, farm machinery, fertilizer, and tinplate steel have added billions of dollars in new costs across the agriculture and food sectors. These burdens are felt acutely across the value chain—from crop producers and equipment operators to distributors and processors—impacting competitiveness, slowing investment, and raising costs for American consumers.

For food manufacturers and processors in particular, tariffs as high as 50% on industrial components like aluminum and tinplate steel—critical to canning, packaging, and preserving food—have been especially harmful. While most canned food is packaged domestically, approximately 80% of the tinplate steel used to make cans comes from

abroad. With only three domestic tinplate production lines remaining, manufacturers have few alternatives. As a result, tariffs have driven packaging costs up by as much as 12%, contributing to higher prices for canned goods and incentivizing some companies to consider sourcing products or packaging from abroad, including from China. This shift directly reduces demand for U.S. grown crops and products, undermining the very farmers and producers these policies are intended to protect.

At the same time, America's farmers and ranchers continue to face surging costs for equipment and fertilizer, up as much as 25% in some regions since 2022. Retaliatory tariffs from global trading partners have further reduced access to export markets for American commodities and processed goods. The result is a double blow: higher costs at home and diminished competitiveness abroad.

The cumulative impact is clear:

- Delayed investments in rural communities;
- Higher food prices at the grocery store for American consumers and families;
- Reduced global competitiveness for domestic food and agriculture products; and
- Shrinking margins and increased business risk for producers.

A recent national survey found that over 70% of Americans cite tariffs as a key driver of rising food costs. These impacts are real, forcing some food manufacturers and producers to cut operations, delay expansion and investment, or exit markets altogether. These are not abstract figures; they are the lived economic consequences facing agricultural and rural communities across the country.

We strongly support fair trade and the protection of American industry. At the same time, we believe there is a more balanced and strategic path forward, one that strengthens trade while safeguarding the health of critical domestic sectors like agriculture and food production.

To that end, we respectfully request that the Administration:

- Engage regularly with grower, producer, and processor organizations to assess the real-world impact of tariffs and trade policy;
- Pursue targeted tariff adjustments, exceptions, and exclusions for key agricultural and food-related inputs where supply chain security is at risk;
- Re-examine tariffs on aluminum and tinplate steel and consider relief where those tariffs are disproportionately harming American food manufacturers, and by extension, American farmers.

We understand the complexity of trade policy in a competitive global environment and appreciate your continued efforts to defend and protect American jobs and workers. Our coalition stands ready to collaborate with you on practical, forward-looking solutions that safeguard America's food security, economic strength and vitality, and industrial competitiveness and leadership.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns, and for your continued service on behalf of American producers, workers, and families.

Sincerely,

*The Rural & Agriculture Council of America
Community Business Alliance
Farm Equipment Manufacturers Association
American Dairy Council
Equipment Marketing & Distribution Association*