

October 6, 2011

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and  
Forestry  
United States Senate  
328-A Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and  
Forestry  
United States Senate  
328-A Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20015

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1305 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20015

***Re: Agriculture Regulatory Moratorium***

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Chairman Lucas, and Ranking Members Roberts and Peterson:

On behalf of the food and agriculture associations signed below and the millions of farmers and ranchers they represent, we ask that as part of the Agriculture Committee's recommendations to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction you include a two-year moratorium on all discretionary, non-essential regulatory actions that would increase the cost of food and agricultural production and processing.

Congress has long been strongly supportive of policy that has led this country's agricultural producers to provide their fellow Americans with a safe, abundant and affordable supply of food, fiber and energy. A key to continuing this bounty is to ensure that federal policy avoids or minimizes cost increases that will hit farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses across the U.S. Unfortunately, current actions by federal agencies threaten to do the opposite. Therefore, we feel extraordinary measures are called for to reduce the climate of uncertainty created by burdensome regulations, including those that are pending.

Our farms, ranches and agribusinesses are impacted by many issues beyond those thought of as traditional agricultural policy. These issues include regulations relating to the environment, immigration and labor, food safety, forests and public lands, access to international markets, financial services, and tax policy.

Knowing that the costs of production will not be unduly increased by non-essential policies coming out of Washington is especially important to producers now, as the Select Committee continues its work and reductions in agriculture spending remain possible. The inclusion of this regulatory moratorium in your recommendations to the Select Committee would help provide certainty to farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses going forward.

Agriculture has been a bright spot in an otherwise dim economy over the past few years. Agricultural production and processing can be one of the drivers of job growth and economic recovery, but to do that the U.S. must ensure that public policy does not hurt the economic viability of farm and ranch families across the country. We urge the Agriculture Committees to request a two year reprieve from unnecessary regulations. Thank you for your help protecting the American public from regulations that will increase the cost of the food, fiber and fuel.

Sincerely,

Ag Processing Inc.  
Agri-Mark, Inc.  
AgriBank  
Agricultural Council of California  
Agricultural Retailers Association  
Alabama Farmers Cooperative, Inc.  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Meat Institute  
American Nursery & Landscape Association  
American Soybean Association  
American Sugar Alliance  
Blue Diamond Growers  
California Canning Peach Association  
California Tomato Growers Association  
Ceres Solutions, LLP  
CHS Inc.  
Co-Alliance, LLP  
CoBank  
Cooperative Council of North Carolina  
Croplife America  
Dairy Farmers of America  
Dairylea Cooperative  
Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Association  
Farm Credit Council  
Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association  
GROWMARK, Inc.  
Idaho Dairymen's Association  
Kansas Cooperative Council  
Land O'Lakes, Inc.  
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers  
MBG Marketing  
MFA Oil Company  
Michigan Milk Producers Association  
National Agricultural Aviation Association  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
National Chicken Council  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives

National Grape Cooperative Association, Inc.  
National Livestock Producers Association  
National Meat Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Potato Council  
National Turkey Federation  
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives  
Northwest Dairy Association/Darigold  
Nebraska Cooperative Council  
Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.  
Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council, Inc.  
Olive Growers Council of California  
Pacific Coast Producers  
Public Lands Council  
Plains Cotton Cooperative Association  
Riceland Foods, Inc.  
Society of American Florists  
South Dakota Wheat Growers  
South Dakota Association of Cooperatives  
South East Dairy Farmers Association  
Southern States Cooperative, Inc.  
St. Albans Cooperative Creamery  
Sunkist Growers  
Sunsweet Growers, Inc.  
Syngenta  
Tennessee Farmers Cooperative  
Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council  
The Fertilizer Institute  
United Egg Producers  
United Fresh Produce Association  
United Producers, Inc.  
Upstate Niagara Cooperative  
USA Rice Federation  
U.S. AgBank  
U.S. Rice Producers Association  
Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
Welch Foods Inc., a Cooperative  
Western Growers