

Casey, Toomey Call on USTR to Protect Agricultural Exports in New International Trade Agreement

Pennsylvania Apples, Pears Subject to Unnecessary Regulations

Thursday, Oct 31

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Pat Toomey (R-PA) joined a bipartisan group of senators urging United States Trade Representative (USTR) Ambassador Michael Froman to protect agricultural exports in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The senators called for fair treatment specifically for apple and pear exports to the European Union, which suffered a recent decline based on excessive regulation and requirement standards for U.S. products.

"Pennsylvania produces some of the best apples and pears in the world," **said Senator Casey**. "I urge Ambassador Froman to make sure that American exports are not subject to unnecessary, burdensome regulations. I'm hopeful that these trade negotiations will result in a fair, level playing field for our great products."

"Agriculture is our Commonwealth's largest industry and Pennsylvania is a national leader in apple production," **said Senator Toomey**. "With this in mind, it is important that any trade agreement with foreign nations significantly increase export opportunities for Pennsylvania farmers, including our apple growers. I encourage Ambassador Froman to do everything in his power to ensure American agricultural producers have the ability to freely market their goods in the European Union."

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the 2011 commercial apple crop, utilized production, in Pennsylvania totaled 439 million pounds. The crop was valued at \$79.7 million. Pennsylvania ranked 4th nationally in utilized apple production.

The 2011 utilized production of pears in Pennsylvania totaled 2,110 tons. The utilized crop was valued at \$2.1 million. The Commonwealth ranked 6th nationally in utilized pear production.

The full text of the letter can be found below:

Ambassador Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th St. NW.
Washington, DC, 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman:

We write today regarding the importance of specific agricultural interests in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). As the negotiations proceed, it is imperative that our agricultural interests are given a top priority in the negotiations, particularly as they relate to the treatment of apple and pear exports.

Trade data over the past few years indicate that exports of United States' apples and pears to the European Union are in steep decline. The volume of apple exports dropped 73% from the 2006 crop to the 2012 crop, while pear export volume declined 73% from the 2009 crop to the 2012 crop. Together, the decline in apple and pear export volume equates to a \$33 million per-year loss in export revenue.

The erosion of the European market for U.S. apple and pear exports is largely the result of different regulatory standards and requirements for pesticides and food additives. Under the European Union's (EU) precautionary principle, rules and procedures often diverge from the science-based, cost-benefit analysis approach of the United States, limiting our nation's agricultural exports to Europe.

As we engage with the EU in these talks, it is important that the sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and non-tariff barriers to U.S. agricultural exports be addressed. The EU will continue to push for additional access to the U.S. market under the TTIP agreement. However, any improved terms of access made available to the U.S. market should be met with reciprocal access for U.S. apple and pear growers.

The TTIP efforts must address the existing market access issues and make establishing a level playing field for our agricultural exports a top priority. We urge you to work with your European counterparts and regulatory authorities to make resolving these technical barriers to trade a priority in the TTIP negotiations. Any SPS regulatory barriers to trade must be based on scientifically-sound information and must not disregard the science-based regulatory decisions made by the United States.

Thank you for your attention to this issue of concern. We look forward to working with you on ensuring that U.S. apple and pear exports are given fair treatment.

Sincerely,

Senator Maria Cantwell
Senator Mike Crapo
Senator Debbie Stabenow
Senator Ron Wyden
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Bob Casey
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Senator Pat Toomey