

January 24, 2023

The Honorable Alexis Taylor
Under Secretary for Trade and
Foreign Agricultural Affairs
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20250

Ambassador Douglas McKalip
Chief Agricultural Negotiator
Office of the United States
Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20006

RE: Non-tariff trade barriers

Under Secretary Taylor and Ambassador McKalip:

Congratulations on your recent Senate confirmations. We write to bring your attention to non-tariff trade barriers on imports of domestically produced peanuts into the European Union (E.U.) caused by unreasonably strict aflatoxin testing protocols. We encourage the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to collaborate with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and industry stakeholders to negotiate fair testing protocols with our E.U. counterparts which would, ultimately, increase foreign market access for U.S. peanuts while ensuring a safe, high-quality product for consumers.

The E.U., a major importer of American peanuts, has expanded aflatoxin testing requirements for U.S. imports. Countries like China and Argentina have ten and five percent of their shipments tested for aflatoxins respectively. By contrast, twenty percent of American grown peanuts are tested for naturally occurring aflatoxins. These requirements are far more extensive than our competitors and put American peanut farmers at a disadvantage when exporting to the E.U.

While we saw significant increases in the first quarter of 2022 compared to 2021, peanut imports into the E.U. have been trending downward since 2003. As a premium market with opportunity for growth, the E.U. plays an important role in domestic peanut export markets. The E.U.'s excessively stringent and seemingly targeted aflatoxin testing of American peanuts stands to exacerbate an already depressed import market with a critical trading partner.

American producers have a long history of cooperating with USDA to ensure the production of safe, nutritious products, and peanut farmers should not face testing standards which imply otherwise. As Members of Congress who proudly represent highly productive peanut regions, we are supportive of USDA and USTR engaging with the E.U. to eliminate non-tariff trade barriers on peanut imports. American producers are already battling variables outside of their control, and unnecessarily strict aflatoxins testing should not compound their struggles.

On behalf of American peanut farmers and invested stakeholders, thank you for consideration.
We look forward to working with you on this matter.

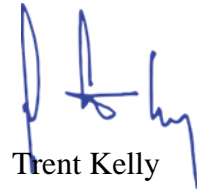
Respectfully,



Barry Moore
Member of Congress



Austin Scott
Member of Congress



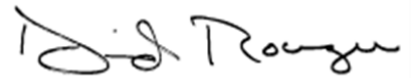
Trent Kelly
Member of Congress



Dr. Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



A. Drew Ferguson IV
Member of Congress



David Rouzer
Member of Congress



Mike Rogers
Member of Congress



Ronny L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Rick W. Allen
Member of Congress



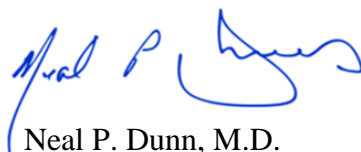
Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress