



December 15, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C., 20500

Dear President Biden:

As America's corn grower leaders, we write to express our continued concern over Mexican President Andres Manuel López Obrador's threat to end imports of biotech corn, the U.S.'s number one ag export to Mexico. Because the stakes for farmers and rural America are so high, we are calling on you to make this issue a critical part of your January 9th meeting with President López Obrador and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

We are also asking that you empower Ambassador Katherine Tai to work with Secretary Vilsack to set a firm, quick timeline with Mexico to withdraw the decree or initiate a case under the biotechnology provisions of the U.S-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement (USMCA), and that you do so without agreeing to a ban of any form of biotech corn, including white corn that is used for human consumption.

Corn farmers are right now in the process of making planting decisions for next spring, and any additional uncertainty in the market affects their ability to appropriately respond to multiple market signals. If the decree is not completely withdrawn, we ask that your administration initiate a case under USMCA.

A trade embargo on biotech corn would ignore the science and turn the clock back on a quarter century of environmental gains. Decades of science show that biotech corn is safe for us. Growers plant biotech corn, which is reviewed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and by regulatory agencies around the world, because it saves money, reduces the use of insecticides and lowers carbon emissions. This technology also allows corn growers to plant seeds that are resistant to severe weather conditions caused by climate change.

A ban on any form of biotech corn would come at a great expense to America's corn growers. Even today, biotech food and feed export applications are being delayed or outright rejected by Mexican regulatory authorities. This non-functioning regulatory system perpetually delays commercialization of newer, more environmentally sustainable biotech crops, denying farmers access to new technology and much-needed productivity gains given the war in Ukraine.

A ban would also adversely impact Mexico. A recently released study shows that it could lead to increased food insecurity in the country – especially among the working class – for whom corn is a major staple. The study shows that corn prices would increase 19 percent, tortilla prices would spike 16 percent on average and the nation's GDP would fall by \$19 billion over ten years.ⁱ

We are highly appreciative of Secretary Vilsack's actions on this issue, but we hope that your administration will set a clear timeline for negotiations and file a dispute with Mexico under USMCA if an agreement is not reached in a timely fashion. We also look to your leadership on this issue during your upcoming meeting with President López Obrador. Your support on this

issue would be in keeping with the pillars of your trade agenda to fight climate change, reduce use of insecticides, enforce existing agreements and expand markets for farmers.

Should you have any questions on this matter, we would be happy to meet with you or your staff to discuss this issue in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Tom Haag, President
National Corn Growers Association

Rodney Harrell, President
Georgia Corn Growers Association

Scott Smith, President
Indiana Corn Growers Association

Brent Rogers, President
Kansas Corn Growers Association

Heath Herring, President
Louisiana Cotton & Grain Association

Matt Frostic, President
Michigan Corn Growers Association

Clint Stephens, President
Missouri Corn Growers Association

Seth Pritchard, President
New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association

Andrew Mauch, President
North Dakota Corn Growers Association

Elizabeth Hinkel, President
Pennsylvania Corn Growers Association

Scott Stahl, President
South Dakota Corn Growers Association

Jim Sugarek, President
Texas Corn Producers Association

Jeremy Wilson, President
Alabama Soybean and Corn Association

Matt Rush, President
Illinois Corn Growers Association

Dennis Friest, President
Iowa Corn Growers Association

Joseph Sisk, President
Kentucky Corn Growers Association

Melvin Baile, President
Maryland Grain Producers Association

Richard Syverson, President
Minnesota Corn Growers Association

Andy Jobman, President
Nebraska Corn Growers Association

Jeff Sparks, President
Corn Growers Association of North Carolina

Ben Klick, President
Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers Association

Justin Rivers, President
South Carolina Corn and Soybean Association

Carl Schultz, President
Tennessee Corn Growers Association

Mark Hoffmann, President
Wisconsin Corn Growers Association