



October 23, 2012

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture
2311 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The impacts of not passing a five-year Farm Bill have already hit the countryside, and unfortunately could be the "beginnings of a drought" for one of the most important trade tools we have in our economy and it is called exports.

The very programs that Congress established in the Farm Bill to develop, maintain and expand long-term export markets for the U.S. are in jeopardy. In fact, we have had a trade mission to Asia indefinitely postponed, because the Foreign Market Development (FMD) program ended October 1. Our partnership with organizations like the U.S. Grains Council and the U.S. Meat Export Federation are so critical, and now the FMD especially and the Market Access Program (MAP) funds will not only put a stop to these trade missions, but eventually, jeopardize our foreign offices around the world.

According to USDA, agricultural exports during the 2011 calendar year totaled over \$136 billion dollars, with corn exports accounting for nearly \$14 billion. If we are going to be viewed as a reliable trading partner, and a serious competitor, then we cannot play roulette with these programs.

We ask you upon your return to Washington D.C., to immediately call for a vote on the five-year Farm Bill. Farmers and ranchers are standing up and taking notice now that these programs are ending. Fighting a drought is bad enough, but watching our long term commitment to being a sustainable food and feed supplier, to both our own country and around the world dry up, is like fighting another drought all over again.

It is not only the Farm Bill that is so critical, but immediate drought aid to our cattle and ranching communities, along with the conservation and dairy programs that are waiting for the House to finally do the job we asked you to do versus playing politics with these programs. We hold both parties accountable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Scheer".

Tim Scheer, Chairman

CC: Nebraska House Representatives