

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 31, 2020

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer  
U.S. Trade Representative  
600 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

We write to follow up on our recent call with USTR Chief Agricultural Negotiator Gregg Doud, to reiterate our support for holding a field hearing in Michigan with the USTR, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Agriculture.

As representatives of a region which is a nationwide leader in specialty crop production, we understand how critical it is that Michigan growers and producers have the opportunity to confer on the issues that are threatening our communities, family farms, and livelihoods.

When Michigan farmers have a level playing field, they can compete with anyone in the world. However, our farmers and growers have suffered significantly due to questionable foreign trade practices and the inability to seek redress. Our specialty crop farmers, which includes the asparagus, blueberry, and cherry growers, among others, are forced to compete on a playing field that is tilted against them.

Specifically, the Michigan tart cherry industry, which produces 75 percent of the annual domestic crop, is currently facing record low prices and an adverse trade landscape. From 2016-2018, imports of dried tart cherries dramatically rose by 1 million pounds, flooding the market with low quality imports. We strongly share in our constituents' concern regarding the International Trade Commission's January 14th negative ruling on the tart cherry industry's case against Turkey's unfair trade practices, which was inconsistent with the Department of Commerce's affirmative preliminary countervailing duty determination from September 2019. Direct relief for trade-impacted crops like tart cherries is critically needed on behalf of our hardworking growers, farmers, and producers.

Thank you for your recent commitment to review available remedies to address unfair pricing in the U.S. market, which is harming producers of seasonal and perishable products. We also thank you for your commitment to hold field hearings. The trade decisions made in Washington regarding specialty crops have a direct impact on our local economy. It is critical that Michigan farmers are able to discuss the negative impacts of uneven trade first-hand.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

  
Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress

  
Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress

  
John Moolenaar  
Member of Congress