The U.S. Alliance of the IMSI
International Maple Syrup Institute
℅ Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association
PO Box 662
Lyndonville, VT 05851

February 26, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Madam Secretary,

Congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of Agriculture. We wish you success in this important role and appreciate your leadership on issues critical to U.S. agriculture.

We write today to express our concerns about the proposed 25% tariffs on Canadian imports. These tariffs would harm U.S. maple syrup producers and impose significant burdens on both consumers and the industry. The overall health of the industry relies on a collaborative interdependence of the supply chain on both sides of the border, with most maple equipment and supplies imported from Canada. The additional costs imposed by the tariffs will lead to higher prices, reduced availability, and potential market disruptions that could hinder the growth of this important agricultural sector.

Maple syrup is a vital part of both the U.S. and Canadian agricultural economies. The U.S. produces approximately 23% of the world's maple syrup (5.86 million gallons in 2024), while Canada produces the remaining 77% (19.9 million gallons). Over the past 20 years, U.S. maple syrup production has grown by an impressive 276%, according to USDA NASS crop data. However, domestic production alone is not sufficient to meet U.S. demand. As a result, roughly 60% of Canada's maple exports come to the U.S., where bulk buyers blend Canadian and American syrup to supply major retailers such as Whole Foods, Target, Wegmans, and Costco. The entire industry across the US and Canada has created a collaborative partnership, through direct relationships and trade associations that benefit producers and stakeholders on both sides of the border. We are partners in the maple industry, rather than competitors.

The proposed tariffs would directly impact U.S. producers, as approximately 73% of the U.S. maple syrup crop is sold in bulk. Bulk buyers operate on tight margins, where even small price increases can determine whether a contract is won or lost. Higher costs will ultimately erode the competitiveness of pure U.S. maple syrup, reducing its share in the broader sweetener and table syrup market. The loss of retail shelf space would slow, if not reverse, the strong growth trends the industry has achieved in recent years.

Furthermore, given that most of the world's maple syrup is produced in Canada, most of the specialized equipment used in maple production is also manufactured there and imported into the U.S. While producers may have most of the equipment they need for the upcoming 2025 season, tariffs on equipment will drive up costs in 2026 and beyond, making expansion more difficult and creating barriers for new entrants. At a time when U.S. agricultural and forestry input costs are already rising, an additional 25% tariff would add further strain, potentially forcing producers out of the industry and stalling its continued growth.

Rather than supporting U.S. maple producers, these tariffs would disrupt trade, limit access to essential supplies, and contribute to inflationary pressures for consumers. A free and open trade relationship with Canada is essential to maintaining a stable, sustainable, and growing maple syrup market.

We urge you to consider the broader impacts of the tariffs on U.S. maple syrup producers, and ask for your leadership in working toward a solution that fosters trade and supports the long-standing agricultural relationship between our two countries. We support creating a more equitable and prosperous environment for maple syrup producers on both sides of the border.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Allison Hope

Allison Hope
Executive Director, Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association
on behalf of the following U.S. Alliance Members

Allison@vermontmaple.org
802-222-6132