

SWEETENER USERS ASSOCIATION

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August 4, 2010

Honorable James Miller
Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the Sweetener Users Association, I would like to express our appreciation for two recent sugar policy actions taken by the Department. First, your early announcement of the minimum tariff rate quota for 2010/11 was timely and much appreciated by our members. As you know, both producers and consumers had requested that USDA take this step. Although the amount of the minimum TRQ is well known and required by law to be announced, the time-consuming process of issuing certificates of quota eligibility (CQEs) does not commence until the TRQ has been announced and allocated. USDA's prompt action should help facilitate badly-needed imports during the early part of the fiscal year. We appreciate your leadership on this matter, and we hope you will encourage your colleagues at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to allocate the TRQ expeditiously.

Second, it is our understanding that the governments of the United States and Mexico have jointly responded to proposals from some segments of the two countries' sugar industries. From what we know of the letter, it appears to be a well-considered and appropriate response. We understand that no new advisory groups or task forces will be created, that each country will continue to make its own sovereign decisions about third-party imports, and that the letter contemplates no new action in respect of the U.S. refined sugar re-export program or Mexico's IMMEX. If these understandings are correct, we would like to commend you and your colleagues at USTR and the relevant Mexican ministries for reaffirming the North American Free Trade Agreement and strengthening bilateral institutions and relationships.

As you know, our members remain concerned about supply adequacy, both this fiscal year and next. We appreciate USDA's statements that additional supply-enhancing steps may be needed, and we concur in this judgment. However, we wanted you to know that your recent actions have been appreciated by our members, and we look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Sincerely,



Perry Cerminara,
Chairman