

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

April 23, 2014

The Honorable Pat Roberts
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Roberts:

Thank you for your letter regarding European Union (EU) trade policies involving geographical indications (GIs) and the impact of these policies on the use of common names by U.S. agricultural stakeholders. We are engaged in a global effort on this issue to advance the interests of U.S. farmers and businesses, to protect the rights of U.S. trademark holders around the world, and to ensure that Americans can continue to use common food names for their products, both at home and abroad.

The United States and the EU have long-standing differences over the scope and level of intellectual property rights protection for GIs. We have raised our strong concerns regarding the impact of the EU's GI policies on made in America products. In the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) negotiations, we have been clear with the EU regarding our strong opposition to existing and future barriers. We will continue to press the EU to expand market access for U.S. producers, such as SMEs that specialize in artisan and other specialty meat products, into the EU and third country markets, including through the removal of barriers such as overly-broad GI protection for EU products.

We are also working on this issue in a variety of other markets, including those you identified, to promote and defend market access for our farmers and ranchers. For example, the CAFTA-DR, Panama and Korea trade agreements contain strong provisions that provide safeguards for American producers in those markets. We have pressed a variety of other governments on their implementation of bilateral trade commitments. As part of this engagement with key trading partners, we have vigorously responded to reports regarding the impact of EU GI registrations on U.S. agricultural products. We will continue to monitor events and actively engage. We are also advancing a robust trademark and common name agenda in a variety of fora, including in the World Trade Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization, as well as in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings.

I welcome your engagement on this critical issue, and look forward to continuing our close coordination to work with you.

Sincerely,



Ambassador Michael B.G. Froman