



THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

May 19, 2020

Secretary Graciela Márquez Colín
Secretaría de Economía
Gobierno de México

Dear Secretary Márquez:

I am writing regarding agricultural trade issues that raise concerns with respect to Mexico's ability to comply with its USMCA obligations and that impact our bilateral trade.

In April, Ambassador C.J. Mahoney spoke with Under Secretary Luz Maria de la Mora seeking to resolve issues related to biotech and glyphosate. I understand that the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Embassy have engaged their Mexican counterparts as well. Unfortunately, to date, we have not seen progress. I therefore request that we work expeditiously to resolve these problems as soon as possible and before entry into force of the USMCA.

In their November 4, 2019, letter to Under Secretary de la Mora, Ambassador Mahoney and Ambassador Gregg Doud underscored concerns that Mexico has not approved any biotech products for food and feed use since May 2018. Mexico's Biosafety Law requires a decision on a complete application within six months of receipt. I urge Mexico to make decisions on complete applications that have passed the six-month mark as soon as possible and to make decisions on all complete applications within six months moving forward.

Mexico has rejected applications for cultivation of biotech cotton. As you know, biotech cotton has been cultivated in Mexico for 25 years with no evidence of adverse impact on the environment, biodiversity, or animal and plant health. I urge Mexico to reevaluate these applications and approve them.

Mexico has also denied import permit applications for glyphosate-containing products. Glyphosate has a demonstrated safety record and is one of the most rigorously studied herbicides in the world. I urge Mexico to reevaluate these applications and grant import permits.

Resolution of these problems requires that Mexico make decisions on complete applications for biotech products for food and feed use and reevaluate rejected applications for cultivation of biotech cotton and import permits for glyphosate-containing products. It is in both of our countries' interests that Mexico maintain science- and risk-based regulatory approaches. This will benefit productivity and innovation in Mexican agriculture, the health and safety of Mexican farmers and consumers, and our overall agricultural trade relationship. A durable solution also

requires that Mexico maintain transparent processes and that Mexican agencies communicate with applicants.

I am ready to work with you to help ensure Mexico's readiness to fulfill its USMCA obligations and to prevent these issues from undermining the strength of our bilateral relationship. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely yours,



Robert E. Lighthizer