

PRESS RELEASE

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Agriculture Transportation Coalition

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Agriculture Transportation Coalition Spearheads Agriculture Letter to the President. Calling for Action on West Coast Port Crisis.

The impact of West Coast port disruption is becoming increasingly dire for U.S. agriculture and forest products exporters. Christmas trees are not being exported and will miss the holiday season in Asia completely. Potatoes are not being exported and the cargo will likely be a total loss for the farmers whose entire year is dependent upon current shipments. Foreign customers are already canceling orders and turning to other countries to satisfy their needs.

The consequences are being felt throughout the country. The railroads are unable to bring agriculture products from the Midwest and the South to West Coast ports because of the labor slowdown at the ports. At the same time, the ocean carriers are passing on their increased cost by imposing draconian congestion surcharge fees on the U.S. exporter, who cannot pass them on to the customer. It is rendering our agriculture and forest products non-competitive in the global marketplace. It is destroying the President's National Export Initiative. It could take years for our agriculture to recover lost foreign markets.

[Click here to read](#) the letter sent by 61 national and regional agriculture organizations, to the President as well as to the Senate and House of Representatives. It is time for the White House to step in. It has tools to do so; we ask the President to intervene personally in order to get the longshore labor back to work, end the slow downs, and compel the terminal operators and the ILWU to complete work on their contract, which expired at the end of June.

The damage to the U.S. economy is profound as agriculture is now the largest export from the United States, and one of the primary areas in which the U.S. is globally preeminent. But that preeminence is now threatened, both immediately, and for some sectors, permanently.

Agriculture Transportation Coalition Executive Director Peter Friedmann is currently traveling around the country, meeting with agriculture growers and producers. He is best reached by cell at 202-329-7040. Inquiries may be directed to Abigail Struxness, AgTC Program Manager at 202-783-3333.

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition's membership includes companies that represent virtually all agriculture and forest products exported from the United States. These products are grown, raised, processed, packaged and shipped from all regions of the U.S., to markets worldwide, where they typically face competition from similar products sourced elsewhere.