

# TRADE

## Expanding International Trade for the Fresh Produce Industry

The U.S. fruit and vegetable industry and American consumers are highly dependent upon international trade. With consumers today demanding year-round availability of produce regardless of geographical growing seasons, exports and imports of fresh fruits and vegetables play a critical role in business viability of fresh produce providers. United Fresh has always supported free and fair trade globally, seeking to open markets to U.S. products while ensuring the same access for foreign products to the United States.

As specific patterns of trade vary greatly among different commodities, current trade activities have obscured foreign market opportunities and expansion for the U.S. produce industry. At the same time, some parts of the domestic produce industry continue to face challenges and business strains from foreign market competitors where growing seasons overlap and cost of production varies.

The current trade relationship between China and the U.S. specifically impacts the produce industry, and the modernized NAFTA agreement, called the U. S. Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA) has great interest for the fresh produce industry. The beginning steps to establish agreements with Japan, the European Union and Great Britain will also have an impact on our industry. United Fresh will continue to work toward free and fair-trade for the fresh produce industry by improving access to export markets critical for U.S. growers.

### We urge Congress and the Administration to:

- Pass the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which will provide greater certainty for the fresh produce industry
- Ensure that NAFTA will not be allowed to expire without a suitable replacement that protects markets that have been developed over the last 25 years
- Find solutions that can enhance the competitiveness of U.S. growers without having unintended consequences that impact the flow of trade in North America
- Pursue other trade agreements that can benefit the fresh produce industry and establish long-term certainty for businesses in our industry

### Trade by the Numbers

- Fresh fruit exports from the United States totaled more than \$3 billion between Oct. 2018 – June 2019
- Fresh vegetable exports from the United States totaled more than \$2.12 billion between Oct. 2018 – June 2019
- The fastest growing markets for U. S. produce include North America, China, Japan, the European Union, Hong Kong, South Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines and Taiwan
- Imports of fresh fruits and vegetables have increased by over \$225 million
- The increase in fruit and vegetable imports has had a net positive impact on U. S. job creation over the last 30 years and have benefitted consumer needs
- 14 million jobs rely on trade with Canada and Mexico, two of the most important markets for fresh fruits and vegetables