

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 13, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Shea
Administrator
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Administrator Shea:

Thank you for your consideration of our comment for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' (APHIS) proposal to change the U.S. market import requirements for apples from certain countries in the European Union (EU) [Docket No. APHIS-2015-0073]. While we appreciate your willingness to allow additional time for stakeholders to review and comment on this issue, we remain concerned about the impact of several aspects of this proposal.

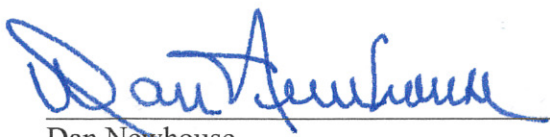
As you know, the introduction of a single invasive plant pest or disease can have a devastating impact on the tree fruit industry. The brown marmorated stink bug alone has resulted in millions of dollars in losses for tree fruit growers. We feel APHIS' systems approach proposal does not fully address key concerns raised by domestic apple growers about the risk for importation of plant pest and diseases from EU countries.

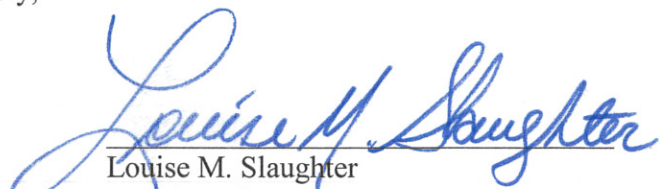
Since Poland has not previously met phytosanitary requirements for U.S. market access, we request that APHIS conduct a thorough pest risk analysis (PRA) for Poland prior to determining whether it is appropriate to allow access under this petition. The current proposal departs from established policy by not conducting a PRA for a new petitioner.

While the other seven EU countries that would be allowed to import under the systems approach have previously conducted PRAs, it is unclear whether the data reflects the most current pest risks. Since the PRAs were completed, these countries have experienced significant regulatory changes, including the establishment of the EU itself. APHIS should also ensure the risk assessment reflects the significant reduction in the crop protection tools available to growers in some parts of the EU, which may reduce their ability to control certain pests and diseases.

Finally, the ability to prevent the introduction of invasive pests and diseases will be determined in large part by the operational work plan (OWP). We ask that APHIS thoroughly consult with stakeholders in industry and the scientific community when developing the OWP. Thank you for your prompt attention to these requests.

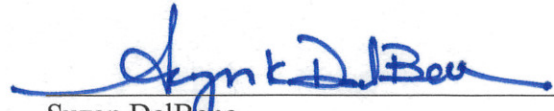
Sincerely,


Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress

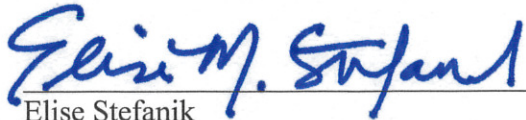

Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



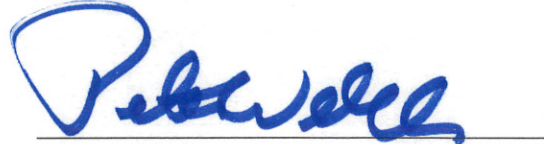
Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress



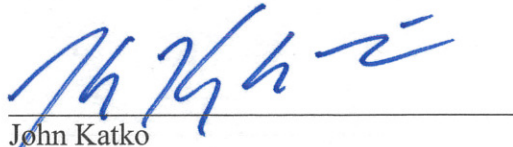
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



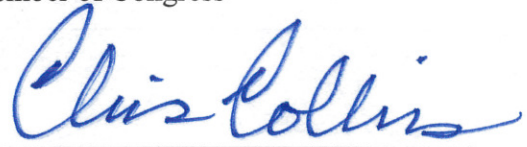
Dan Benishek, M.D.
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



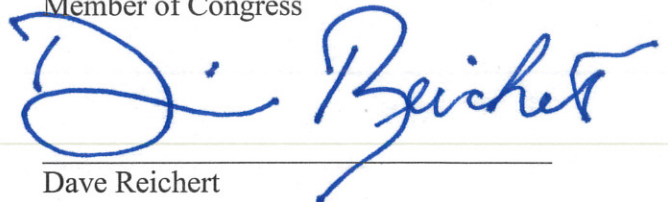
John Katko
Member of Congress



Chris Collins
Member of Congress



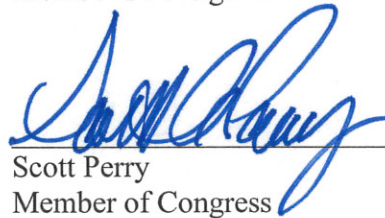
Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



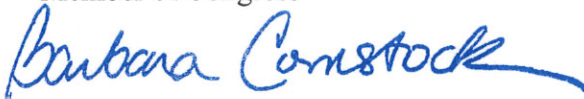
Dave Reichert
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Scott Perry
Member of Congress



Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress



Jeff Denham
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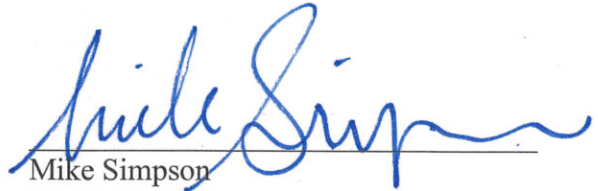
Bill Shuster
Member of Congress



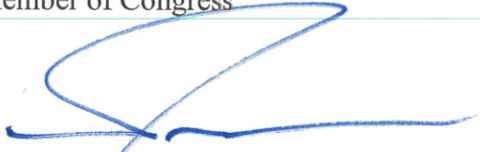
Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Bob Goodlatte
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Mike Simpson
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Tom Reed
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Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress