



May 1, 2018

The Honorable Ted McKinney  
Under Secretary of Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs  
United States Department of the Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary McKinney;

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) as the national trade association for the 88,000 family farm and ranch operations producing lamb and wool, we write to follow up to our meeting this winter, specifically on trade priorities.

We appreciate the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) strong support of our export programs, particularly the program support for American wool, which is fully 50 percent marketed overseas in recent years. FAS programs are critical to introducing foreign buyers to American wool.

Our top priority for lamb is re-opening the Japanese market to American lamb. Unfortunately, Japan has been closed to us since the BSE issue nearly 15 years ago even though there is no risk in American lamb. In fact, prior to our product being prohibited Japan was the top valued export market for American lamb.

The efforts underway this year to engage the United Kingdom (U.K.) in a potential trade agreement prompts concerns from our industry and we urge a cautious approach on lamb meat trade. The addition of subsidized lamb meat from the U.K. to the American market could be significantly disruptive, given our market is already one of the most crowded lamb markets in the world, with over 50 percent of consumption imported.

American lamb is not approved for trade to the United Kingdom nor the European Union, nor do we the significant have tariff rate quotas on lamb trade as those countries employ.

As relayed in our meeting, the TSE rule proposed by USDA in the previous administration should not precede accomplishing market access for American lamb to Japan, Europe and China.

Thank you for your continued support of America's sheep producers and our priorities in trade discussions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Corn".

Mike Corn  
President  
cc The Honorable Greg Ibach