September 8, 2017

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
Ambassador
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Perdue and Ambassador Lighthizer:

As the nation’s largest agricultural producer and exporter, California’s farmers and ranchers are an important constituency for the promotion and expansion of free and fair trade for the United States. Our unique agricultural diversity, representing more than 400 different agricultural products, makes market access issues along with sanitary and phytosanitary measures key priorities for our growers and manufacturers.

In working collaboratively with the Administration to enhance and expand our global trade ties, California’s agricultural community would like to extend an invitation to you, or an appropriate designee, to visit our state and meet with our agricultural representatives. This trip will allow the opportunity to visit farming operations as well as discuss trade priorities with California’s agricultural trade stakeholders – representing more than 30 agricultural boards, commissions, marketing orders, cooperatives and associations.

We look forward to working with you in expanding the nation’s agricultural trade outlook while also protecting our farmers, ranchers and farmworkers from unfair and non-reciprocal trade relationships.

We, the undersigned, are hopeful for the opportunity to share our outlook and priorities for the nation’s trade agenda with you in the coming months. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) can serve as your point of contact and will work with the stakeholder community to ensure a robust and engaging visit. Please contact Carol Tate, CDFA at (916) 654-0433 or carol.tate@cdfa.ca.gov for coordination.

Sincerely,

Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
Donn Zea, Executive Director
California Dried Plum Board

Michelle Connelly, Executive Director/CEO
California Walnut Board & Commission

Joel Nelson, President
California Citrus Mutual

Richard Matoian, Executive Director
American Pistachio Growers

Richard Waycott, President/CEO
Almond Board of California

Paul Buttner, Manager of Environmental Affairs
California Rice Commission

Melissa Poole, Senior Counsel
Director of Governmental Affairs
Wonderful Orchards

Bill Mattos, President
California Poultry Federation

Jim R. Cranney, Jr., President
California Citrus Quality Council

Paul Wenger, President
California Farm Bureau Federation

Robert Koch, President/CEO
Wine Institute

Mark Jansen, President/CEO
Blue Diamond Growers
John Talbot, CEO
California Milk Advisory Board

Frederick W. Klose, Executive Director
California Agricultural Export Council

Marcy Martin, Director/Trade
California Fresh Fruit Association

Rayne Thompson, VP Government Relations
Sunkist and Fruit Growers Supply

Matthew M. McInerney, Sr. Executive VP
Western Growers

Kathleen Nave, President
California Table Grape Commission

Debbie Powell, President/General Manager
California Raisin Marketing Board