

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins,

Since taking office, the Administration's approach to international trade has been marked by uncertainty and instability. The off-and-on tariffs and concerns about the stability of existing trade agreements have posed challenges to American producers and given competitors such as Brazil and Argentina an advantage. Within this context, it is critical that farmers and other agricultural stakeholders have access to accurate and timely data and reports.

We are writing to you concerning the late publication and alteration of the Quarterly Agricultural Trade Report. On June 2nd, 2025, you published the Quarterly Ag Trade Report, which was a few days after the scheduled release on May 29th. This report is one of many essential resources that the Economic Research Service (ERS) and Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) publish. Market and trade reports are critical tools for various agricultural stakeholders. They have historically been viewed as objective and are used by farmers, academics, traders, and others who expect and rely upon the government to be honest brokers and put forth timely data that reflects the state of the agricultural economy.

When the report was published, it was incomplete: it did not include the explanatory section, which provides context for the projections and what global conditions underlie any shifts in the numbers. The report also projected a slight increase in the agricultural trade deficit, which runs counter to the narrative that the Administration has publicly pushed. This makes it appear that you withheld the report because of unflattering data. Concerningly, holding back this report implies that the Administration is willing to withhold or possibly meddle with data that doesn't comport with its worldview. That undermines the hard and honest work of staff at FAS, ERS, and within other parts of USDA. In order to rebuild trust it is essential that you dispel any notion that you are allowing political interests to infect what should be objective, unbiased reports.

Given the delay and the redacted explanatory information, we have several questions and requests:

1. Why was the explanatory portion of the report removed?
2. Please provide a detailed explanation and methodology for how the data for this report was collected.
3. Were there any discrepancies in the methodology for how this report was collected, analyzed, and collated compared to past reports?
4. Please provide the explanatory section of the report.

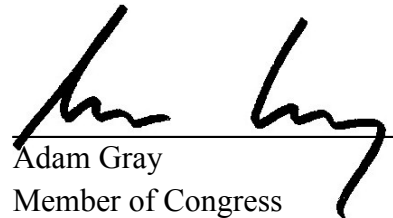
5. Please provide an explanation for the delay in the publication of this report. What were the internal processes that prevented the report from being published on time?
6. Will the next quarterly report be published on time and contain the explanatory section?

We would like answers to these questions and requests by July 14, 2025.

Sincerely,



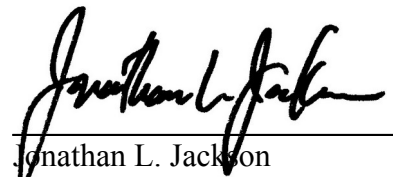
Shontel M. Brown
Vice Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture



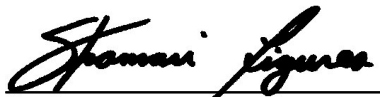
Adam Gray
Member of Congress



Angie Craig
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee on
Agriculture



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Shomari Figures
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