

RELEASE IN FULL

FOOD INDUSTRY CODEX COALITION

.....
Advancing Sound International Policy Through Science

October 18, 2010

Secretary Hilary Clinton
US Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Secretary Tom Vilsack
US Department of Agriculture
Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Clinton and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the members of the Food Industry Codex Coalition (FICC)¹ we applaud the Administration's global commitment to food security, through its *Feed the Future* initiative, and urge your strong and continuing support for the US government's role in Codex² to further this objective. We address this appeal to both of you, as it relates both to your individual and joint responsibilities on Codex Alimentarius. We are much encouraged by the Administration's view that "the private sector is particularly important for combating food insecurity and increasing the sustainability of our efforts," and we enthusiastically welcome this partnership with the Administration.

We draw your attention especially to the critical relationship between Codex and *Feed the Future*. A vibrant science-based global food safety regulatory system which Codex fosters is among the most tangible and valuable components in the strategy to further our shared goal to achieve global food security. Safe food is a prerequisite for a sufficient

¹ The FICC represents the interests of over 70 food companies and trade associations keenly interested in the international standard setting activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC). FICC recognizes the critical role Codex serves to facilitate trade and protect consumer health. The coalition, which represents the entire food chain from production to retail, works to influence international food policy based on science. FICC members actively engage with U.S. delegates and Codex staff in an effort to support and strengthen U.S. leadership in Codex.

² The Codex Alimentarius was created in 1963 under the joint umbrellas of the United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) with a dual mandate: protection of the health of consumers and the facilitation of fair practices in food trade.

supply. For our developing country partners, Codex standards serve a vital role in protecting the health of their people, and in facilitating market opportunities for their agricultural commodities. For the US food and agriculture industry, these science-based Codex rules help protect our \$100 billion agricultural export market by setting global standards for safe and fair food trade. Moreover, they lay the foundation for achieving the President's National Export Initiative goal of doubling exports in the next five years.

For all these reasons the US should increase its presence and influence in Codex. Specifically, we urge your close attention, high priority, and full funding support in these areas:

- US Codex Office, USDA, and international outreach programs;
- Office of the Codex Chairperson, currently held by an American at USDA;
- Codex-related positions at both FAO and WHO, the two Codex UN oversight institutions;
- Committed and focused senior policy level participation in the US Codex Policy Committee;
- High-level participation in US delegations to Codex Commission and committee meetings;
- Consistent policy positions for Codex meetings; and
- Enhanced collaboration between the US Mission and the Codex Secretariat at FAO in Rome.

FICC acknowledges with appreciation our government's responsiveness to previous petitions to the Administration to give strong support to Codex issues, and notes particularly USDA's earlier action to strengthen the leadership of the US Codex Office.

At this time we respectfully urge your renewed attention to these other critical areas of Codex activity. Ensuring the full potential of Codex is an essential component to improve global food safety and achieving America's priority goal of global food security.

Thank you for your consideration of these views.

Sincerely,

American Beverage Association
American Frozen Food Institute
Animal Health Institute
Association of Dressings and Sauces
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Calorie Control Council
Campbell Soup Company
Corn Refiners Association
CropLife America

Enzyme Technical Association
Flavor and Extract Manufacturers Association of the United States
Global Agritrends
Grocery Manufacturers Association
Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils
International Association of Color Manufacturers
International Dairy Foods Association
International Food Additives Council
International Formula Council
Juice Products Association
National Cattleman's Beef Association
National Confectioners Association
National Fisheries Institute
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Renderers Association
Nestle USA
Pet Food Institute
US Meat Export Federation
ViaGen, Inc.
Vinegar Institute

cc:

Ron Kirk, USTR
Islam Siddiqui, USTR Agriculture Negotiator
Margaret Hamberg, Commissioner FDA
Ertharin Cousin, Ambassador to the US Mission to UN Agencies Rome
Jim Miller, Undersecretary of State USDA FFAS
Elizabeth Hagen, Undersecretary of Food Safety USDA
Catherine Woteki, Undersecretary of State USDA REE
Robert Hormats, Undersecretary of State Economic, Energy and Agriculture
Francisco Sanchez, Undersecretary for International Trade, DOC
Rajiv Shah, Administrator USAID
Jose Fernandez, Assistant Secretary of State, Economic Energy and Business
Ester Brimmer, Assistant Secretary of State, International Organizations
Cheryl Mills, Chief of Staff to Secretary of State
Ann Tutwiler, Global Food Security Coordinator USDA
Michael Taylor, Deputy Commissioner for Foods, FDA
Gayle Smith, White House National Security Council
Karen Hulebak, Codex Chairperson
Karen Stuck, US Codex Manager