

June 26, 2009

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Chairman  
House Agriculture Committee  
2211 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Ranking Member  
House Agriculture Committee  
2311 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Lucas:

On behalf of America's agriculture producers and agribusinesses, thank you for your dedication and commitment to farmers, ranchers, and the related industries that provide the U.S. with the world's most abundant, affordable and safe food supply.

We write to ask you for your continued oversight of food safety as this topic is the focus of congressional action. As you know, a commitment to food safety is paramount for everyone involved in the agriculture industry. We have an obligation to produce a safe, nutritious product for domestic and international consumers, and that obligation is at the core of all that we do twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

It is important to note that everyone plays a role in food safety, including the food industry and the regulatory agencies. Therefore, we support Congress' efforts to strengthen the country's food- and animal feed-safety systems utilizing sound science and a risk-based approach. We also recognize the importance of structuring and providing adequate resources to our food- and feed-safety systems to increase efficiencies. However, H.R. 2749, the "Food Safety Enhancement Act of 2009" contains some very troubling provisions.

Specifically, the bill would give the Food and Drug Administration oversight of many on-farm production activities, most of which fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Congressional Agriculture Committees. These provisions remain a continued concern for our organizations. We request that you communicate these on-farm concerns, as noted in the attached briefing paper, to the chairman and ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Furthermore, we strongly urge you as chairman and ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee to seek referral of provisions in H.R. 2749 which may fall under your jurisdiction.

Again, thank you for your leadership. We look forward to working with you as Congress continues the development of food safety legislation.

Sincerely,

American Beekeeping Federation  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Soybean Association  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Sunflower Association  
North American Millers' Association  
Pet Food Institute  
US Canola Association  
US Rice Producers Association  
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council  
USA Rice Federation

[Attachment]