

April 6, 2021

U.S. International Trade Commission
500 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20436
RE: Investigation Nos. 332-584

Dear Chairman Kearns and Commissioners:

We want to express our support for the Section 332 investigation for cucumbers and squash as requested by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. The Section 332 investigation will provide assistance to American produce growers as they struggle with seasonal imports during their harvest season.

Seasonal cucumber and squash imports from Mexico continue to dramatically impact U.S. markets and threaten the future of domestic farm production of perishable produce. Import data from land grant universities and state departments of agriculture affirm that seasonal imported squash and cucumbers negatively impact our vegetable growers, their markets, and communities.

According to a recent report by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), the total weight of squash shipped into or within the U.S. has increased by 13.75% between 2015 to 2020. Of this increase, 84.49% is accounted for by imports from Mexico. While imported squash from Mexico has increased in both volume and market share as U.S. demand for fresh and chilled squash increases, the growth in the size of the overall market did not translate into growth for domestic producers.

The FDACS report also indicated a similar trend in market share decline for cucumber producing states. Florida, Georgia, and Michigan, our nation's top producing cucumber states, have each seen a significant reduction in market share and shipment weight ranging from 35% to 63% in the last 20 years. However, in 2020 the market share of imported cucumbers from Mexico was at a 34% increase with a shipment weight of 1.5 billion pounds (134% increase). As the total weight of cucumbers shipped into or within the U.S. has increased 75% in the past 20 years, from 1.2 billion pounds to 2.1 billion pounds, 853 million pounds is accounted for by imports from Mexico (94.7%). Like squash, the growth of the overall market did not translate into growth for domestic producers.

Additionally, a 2019 economic study by the University of Georgia suggests that if import and pricing trends continue, rural Georgia economies face the loss of \$1 billion in economic impact including 8,000 jobs.

This Section 332 investigation by the ITC for cucumbers and squash is needed to make a meaningful determination as to the impact of these seasonal imports on our markets. Market changes occur quickly and can devastate a grower's season in a matter of days if imports increase and the resulting price decreases coincide with harvest. Please feel free to contact us for additional information. We appreciate your efforts on behalf of our growers and rural communities.

Sincerely,



Austin Scott
Member of Congress



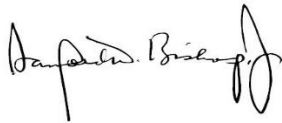
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Rick W. Allen
Member of Congress



Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



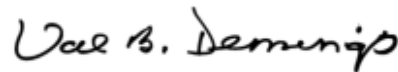
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