

Trade and Crop Technology Committee

Report to NGFA Board of Directors

March 2025

I. Key Issues:

- EU Deforestation
- Mexico Non-GMO
- America First Trade Policy

II. Committee Activities:

A. European Union Deforestation (EUDR): During the Sep. 8-9 Board of Directors meeting in Colorado Springs, several Board and Executive Committee members asked about NGFA's plan to develop compliance guidance for the EUDR at both the country elevator and export level. NGFA had been in a holding pattern in developing any material because the US Soybean Export Council (USSEC) was taking the lead in working with both the US Government and EU. Based on the EC and Board recommendations NGFA sent a letter to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and the USDA urging both to assist the grain, feed, processing and bulk commodity export industry in complying with the EU's Deforestation regulation that, at the time, would be fully implemented on January 1, 2025. USSEC did not have any objections to the letter.

While the implementation of the EUDR has been postponed from its planned launch in January 2025, NGFA remains concerned that, if implemented, the EUDR will have a direct logistical, operational, and financial negative impact on U.S. grain and oilseed. NGFA believes that in the absence of a complete repeal of EUDR there needs to be better communication and collaboration between the USG and EU before the regulation goes into effect and will communicate this to the Trump Administration.

B. America First Trade Policy: On January 20, President Trump [issued](#) an memorandum titled the "America First Trade Policy," which mandates a sweeping review of current US trade and economic policies. Notably, not among this plan is the immediate imposition of new tariffs. Instead, the memo focuses on establishing a "robust and reinvigorated trade policy that promotes investment and productivity" while benefiting "American workers, manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and businesses."

The memo also directs several agencies to investigate and make recommendations relating to trade deficits, unfair trade practices, and creating an External Revenue Service; and to review existing US trade agreements, the *de minimis* exemption, and export controls. The outcomes and recommendations are due to President Trump by April 1, 2025.

On Feb. 2 President Trump [signed three executive orders](#) to impose new tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China to start on Feb. 4. On Feb. 5 agreements were reached to temporarily pause the tariffs for Canada and Mexico for 30 days. This 30-day suspension is intended to provide time for all parties to finalize and implement enhanced border security initiatives.

However, on Feb. 10, President Donald Trump announced 25% tariffs on [steel](#) and [aluminum](#) imports. The tariffs will apply widely to all U.S. imports of steel and aluminum, including from Canada and Mexico. Trump authorized the new tariffs under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act, which gives the President broad authority to impose trade restrictions on domestic security grounds.

No agreement has been reached with China. They imposed new tariffs on a range of U.S. products, not including grains or oilseeds. Beginning February 10, a 15 percent tariff was imposed on coal and liquefied natural gas, and a 10 percent tariff was imposed on crude oil, agricultural machinery, large-displacement cars, and pickup trucks.

On Feb. 13, Trump signed an [Executive Order](#) implementing reciprocal tariffs to address trade imbalances. The EO directs agencies to investigate and propose remedies for unfair trade practices, including higher tariffs imposed by other nations, non-tariff barriers, subsidies, and currency manipulation. The Administration aims to ensure that U.S. trading partners with higher duties on American goods face equivalent tariffs. Howard Lutnick, Trump's nominee to lead the Commerce Department, said all reports should be complete by April 1 and that Trump could act immediately afterward.

These tariffs are in addition to the new 10% tariff on goods from China, and the 25% tariff on imports from Canada and Mexico that are currently paused.

NGFA is continuing to closely monitor the results of the review by agencies on trade deficits and trade practices and the negotiations between the Trump Administration, Canada, China and Mexico.

- C. Mexico Non-GMO Corn:** On Feb. 5 the Mexican government announced a repeal of the provisions of their decree that was in dispute regarding biotech corn: (1) an immediate ban on the use of GE corn in dough and tortillas, and (2) an instruction to Mexican government agencies to gradually eliminate the use of GE corn for other food uses and in animal feed.

The committee is continuing to monitor the status of Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum's proposed two constitutional amendments that would declare corn as an element of the country's national identity and prevent the cultivation of GM corn in Mexico.

III. Other Activities:

The committee and NGFA staff also were engaged in the following activities from September 2024 – March 2025:

- The Crop Technology Subcommittee met on Oct. 3 to discuss priority crop technology policy, issues and messaging moving forward. During the productive discussions with grain handlers, producers, government agencies and tech providers, the committee agreed that NGFA needs to focus on developing principles that drive committee engagement, greater information sharing with tech providers, more communication to members on deregulated traits and increased engagement with producer and agribusiness associations.
- NGFA staff and Chairman O'Mara attended a briefing on Dec. 3 by Luis Rosendo Gutierrez, Mexico's newly appointed Undersecretary of International Commerce who will be the point person in President Sheinbaum's administration to negotiate the 2025 renewal of the USMCA. During the discussion Undersecretary Rosendo highlighted that Sheinbaum delivered a presentation on Nov. 28 (Thanksgiving) that highlighted the government's plan to improve and increase rail infrastructure in Mexico over the next three years.
- The Trade Subcommittee met virtually on Dec. 6 to discuss the status of trade related issues and the next steps during the transition in Congress and from the Biden Administration to the Trump Administration.
- NGFA offered its support to Howard Lutnick, nominee for Secretary of Commerce, for his Confirmation hearing on Wed., Jan. 29, noting in a statement, "As the U.S. agricultural sector relies on fair and open trade, we need a leader at the Department of Commerce who will ensure a level playing field for U.S. agriculture and agribusiness and push back against unfair barriers to trade that disadvantage U.S. agriculture and the grain and feed industry."
- The Crop Technology subcommittee met with Corteva's wheat breeding team on Jan. 31 to discuss the company's new non-GMO hybrid Hard Red Winter Wheat technology and the status of commercial introduction. NGFA anticipates additional collaboration and communication with Corteva prior to the launch of the hybrid seed.
- NGFA met with representatives from the Office of Public Liaison in the Executive Office of the President on Feb. 7 to establish a relationship with the White House and identify key contacts for NGFA's priority issues including trade and crop technology.
- NGFA staff and Chairman O'Mara met with staff and legal representatives from ASTA and BIO on Feb. 10 to discuss the impact of the December 2 court decision that vacated the SECURE Rule while letting approved traits stand.