April 7, 2016

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
House Education and the Workforce Committee
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Scott
Ranking Member
House Education and Workforce Committee
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Scott:

We are writing in support of efforts to expand the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) to allow schools to serve more fruits and vegetables whether they are fresh, frozen, canned or dried.

One of the most effective ways of promoting healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime is to ensure school-aged children eat more fruits and vegetables. Expanding the program to allow frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables in addition to fresh would provide school nutritionists with an affordable option for increasing the variety of healthy fruits and vegetables schools can offer year-round, thus furthering the program's ability to promote improved childhood nutrition and serve more children.

USDA's own 2015 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that Americans eat more fruits and vegetables, regardless of the form, and expanding the FFVP would align the program with the agency's recommendations. The goal of expanding the program is not to limit the ability of schools to serve more fruits and vegetables; rather, it is to expand the options of produce available in the snack program.

The FFVP does important work in educating school children in low-income schools that healthy fruits and vegetables can fuel their bodies and minds, and an important component of this program should be teaching children that healthy fruits and vegetables come in many different forms.

As your committee considers reauthorization of the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010,* we ask that you include language to expand the FFVP to allow schools to serve fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables. We thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Agri-Women of America
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Fruit and Vegetable Processors and Growers Coalition
Apricot Producers of California
California Canning Peach Association
California Date Commission
California Dried Fruit Coalition
California Dried Plum Board
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Fig Advisory Board
California League of Food Processors
California Strawberry Commission
Canned Food Alliance
Can Manufacturers Institute
Del Monte Foods
Food Producers of Idaho
Idaho Agriculture in the Classroom
Idaho Cooperative Council, Inc.
Idaho-Oregon Fruit and Vegetable Association
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation
Jasper Wyman & Son
Lakeside Foods
MBG Marketing/The Blueberry People
Michigan Asparagus Growers
Michigan Carrot Growers
Michigan Farm Bureau Federation
Michigan Processing Apple Growers
Midwest Food Processors Association
Milk Producers of Idaho
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grape Cooperative Association, Inc.
North American Blueberry Council
Northwest Food Processors Association
Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.
Oregon Farm Bureau Federation
Oregon Women for Agriculture
Pacific Coast Producers
Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association
Red Gold, Inc.
Seneca Foods
Sunsweet Growers, Inc.
Sun-Maid Growers of California
Texas Food Processors Association
Valley Fig Growers
Washington Asparagus Commission
Washington Blueberry Commission
Washington Farm Bureau Federation
Washington Friends of Farms and Forests
Washington Red Raspberry Commission
Washington State Council of Farmer Cooperatives
Welch's Food, Inc.
Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
Wisconsin Agribusiness Association
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers
Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association

Cc: Members of the House Education and Workforce