SWEETENER USERS ASSOCIATION

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SUA Strongly Opposes Amendments to U.S.-Mexico Sugar Agreements

Washington, DC (June 21, 2017) – In comments filed today in response to the Commerce Department's request for comments on amendments to the U.S.-Mexico sugar suspension agreements, America's sugar-using companies warned the amended agreements will put American jobs at food companies, large and small, at risk and burden U.S. consumers.

The Sweetener Users Association (SUA) wrote:

> *"Food companies that use significant amounts of sugar in their operations employ 600,000 Americans directly, and account for many more jobs when economic multiplier effects are taken into account. Unfortunately, higher U.S. sugar prices and restricted supplies as a result of federal sugar policies have already put undue pressure on U.S. jobs in the sugar-using sector, contributing to the loss of 123,000 American manufacturing jobs over the last 18 years. Our concern about additional job loss as a result of federal government policies is even greater after reviewing the proposed amended suspension agreements over the last few days.*
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> *"… Both the current suspension agreements and the proposed amended suspension agreements are fundamentally flawed in limiting access to imported sugar that is essential to adequately supplying a U.S. market where domestic producers are only able to supply about 75 percent of domestic needs. The proposed suspension agreements add new layers of restraints on trade by not only limiting the volume of available sugar in the domestic market, but also go further in unnecessarily raising the guaranteed floor price to both U.S. sugar producers and the Mexican sugar industry.*
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> *"Even tighter controls on the total volume of sugar in the U.S. market will force sugar prices higher than current domestic prices, which are already at least 80 percent higher than world market prices. Given the constraints on supplies introduced by the suspension agreements, we believe that increasing the ending stocks-to-use ratio from 13.5 percent to 15.5 percent would provide both U.S. cane refiners and food companies more adequate supplies of sugar.*
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> *"… SUA strongly opposes adoption of the amendments. The original suspension agreements, while ill-considered, would be far preferable to these amendments. … [T]hese amendments will in their overall impact be overwhelmingly negative to the interests of our members, their employees and their ultimate customers, American consumers."*

For the full comments, click here.

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