

SWEETENER USERS ASSOCIATION

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Expert: U.S. Sugar Policy Has Reduced Potential Positive Economic Impacts of Trade Agreements

Washington, DC (November 17, 2015) – Today, in testimony before the International Trade Commission, Vice President of Agralytica Tom Earley detailed how the protectionist U.S. sugar program has reduced the potential positive economic impacts of trade agreements implemented over the last 25 years.

Earley, who testified on behalf of the [Sweetener Users Association](#), explained:

“The sugar industry has consistently urged the administration and U.S. trade negotiators to hold fast against any significant concessions on foreign access to the domestic sugar market. Unfortunately, once the United States tells other countries in trade negotiations that the sugar program is sacrosanct, those countries are then free to hold out against market access concessions on their own sensitive agricultural sectors. The result is that the other 98 percent of U.S. agriculture gets less access to foreign markets than it otherwise might have gained. The effect also spills over into the services and manufacturing sectors.”

Earley continued:

“The sugar program has always worked by limiting U.S. cane sugar refiners’ imports of raw sugar, putting refiners at a competitive disadvantage relative to producers of beet sugar. The failure of most recent FTAs to increase U.S. access to foreign sugar as consumption has risen has tended to worsen the supply situation for cane refiners. Now the terms of the U.S.-Mexico suspension agreements may inadvertently complicate the ability of U.S. cane refiners to supply sufficient amounts of refined cane sugar already this year. This could result in the closure of one or more refineries. ...

“The Sweetener Users Association has supported every U.S. effort at trade liberalization and will continue to do so. The members of the association believe that freer trade is beneficial to their industries and to the nation’s economy.”

The full testimony can be found [here](#).

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