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**Solutions for Costly High-Tier Sugar Imports Examined as Colloquium
Concludes**

*Smart Policy Reforms to Ensure Adequate, Cost-effective Sugar Supplies for All Stakeholders
Featured Prominently at This Year's International Gathering*

Washington, D.C. (February 26, 2025) – The International Sweetener Colloquium, co-hosted by the [Sweetener Users Association](#) (SUA) and the [International Dairy Foods Association](#), concluded today with a discussion of solutions for reducing dependence on costly high-tier imports and ensuring adequate, reasonably priced sugar supplies.

Randy Green of Watson Green LLC led the discussion, noting that while stocks-to-use (S/U) ratios may suggest adequate sugar supplies, they mask a heavy reliance on costly high-tier imports. High-tier imports — designed to be rare and subject to prohibitive tariffs — reached record highs last year, equivalent to a majority of the total 16.6 percent S/U ratio. In 2024/25, high-tier imports are projected to remain significant, equivalent to almost a third of the total 15.3 percent S/U ratio.

“We are at a policy fork in the road,” said Green. “Without reliable cost-of-production data — available from USDA for most other major crops — it is impossible to determine whether high-tier pricing is necessary for sugar growers, processors and refiners to remain profitable. Domestic production and current minimum import allocations are insufficient to deliver adequate, cost-effective sugar supplies, leading to the unprecedented reliance on high-tier imports.”

Moderated by SUA President Rick Pasco, the panel discussed pragmatic reforms to move away from high-tier sugar imports, many of which were in the farm bill passed by the House Agriculture Committee last year (H.R. 8467), including:

- Ensuring marketing allotments do not restrict domestic production growth.
- Requiring periodic reallocation of the raw sugar tariff rate quota.
- Updating the definition of “refined” sugar to reflect modern manufacturing standards.

Building on the dynamic discussions held over the entire colloquium, the session underscored this moment as a critical opportunity to modernize U.S. sugar policy. Key quotes on the need for reform from the week include:

- “With U.S. sugar prices almost double global prices, we appreciate this opportunity to bring industry leaders together to discuss solutions — including U.S. sugar program reform in the farm bill — to make sugar more affordable for businesses and consumers. This year’s record

attendance is a clear sign that the time to fix U.S. sugar policy is now.” — Rick Pasco, President, SUA

- “The farm bill that passed the House Agriculture Committee last year took important steps toward ensuring the U.S. sugar program works for all stakeholders. Common-sense reforms included in the bill, like adjusting tariff rate quotas and updating the definition of ‘refined’ sugar to match current industry standards, will help reduce inefficiencies that drive up sugar costs for all stakeholders.” — Bill O’Conner, Agriculture Policy Expert, Watkinson Miller PLLC

Congress has the opportunity in this year’s farm bill to enact straightforward reforms to the U.S. sugar program and provide relief to American companies and consumers.

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The Sweetener Users Association (SUA) represents American food companies that use sugar to make the products U.S. consumers know and love — from sweet treats to everyday staples like bread, pasta sauce, yogurt and peanut butter. Sugar-using companies employ hundreds of thousands of Americans across the United States, including bakers, confectioners, factory workers and more.

Connect with us at SweetenerUsers.org or follow us on Twitter [@SweetenerUsers](https://twitter.com/SweetenerUsers).

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