

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508
September 27, 2010

The Honorable Dave Camp
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Camp:

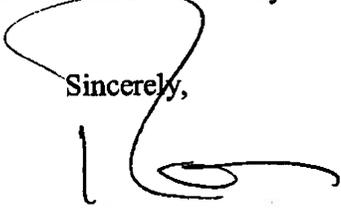
Thank you for your letter of September 9 regarding your concern over Israel's decision to implement a duty on the importation of U.S.-produced Asian carp. I am well aware of the increasing role our trade policies can play on advancing key environmental objectives, including addressing the threats resulting from invasive alien species. I applaud your creative, market-based efforts to deal with the problems that Asian carp cause in U.S. waterways.

I am also aware of the importance of the Israeli market to U.S. exporters, and I'm sure you are aware of the benefits provided by the U.S.-Israel Free Trade Agreement (FTA). However, agricultural trade between the United States and Israel was negotiated independently of our bilateral free trade agreement. Our current access to Israeli agricultural markets is governed by the 2004 U.S.-Israel Agreement on Trade in Agriculture Products (ATAP). That agreement does not provide for the removal of tariffs on carp and certain other agricultural products.

We continue to explore negotiating enhancements of the ATAP and, in doing so, will examine prospects for improved tariff treatment of carp. USTR remains steadfast in our position that agricultural tariffs and non-tariff barriers must be eliminated in order to achieve the full potential of the FTA. Like you, we are not satisfied with the terms of the current agreement as it severely restricts our market access across 600 agricultural good categories.

Reaching an agreement with Israel on agricultural trade under the FTA is important to us and we welcome your support and assistance in pressing Israel to open their markets to more American agricultural goods and fishery products. I look forward to continued work with you on these and other trade matters. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,


Ambassador Ron Kirk