

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 19, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

We continue to hear from growers about the important role that methyl bromide plays in the production of numerous specialty crops throughout our country, including strawberries, sweet potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, melons, fruit trees, almonds, prunes, dates, walnuts, figs, cut flowers, grapes, and forest nursery, plant nursery and orchard replants. It's also important for controlling pests in flour mills, food storage and food processing facilities. Unfortunately, many growers and users in our states are struggling due to reduced critical use allocations of methyl bromide, the re-emergence of certain pests and the recent removal of iodomethane (a methyl bromide alternative) from the market.

Due to this emergency situation, we encourage Department of State and the U.S. delegation to seek supplemental critical use exemptions (CUEs) at the upcoming "32nd Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol" on July 23-27, 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand and the Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Geneva, Switzerland on November 12-16, 2012. As you are aware, CUEs are allocated on a calendar basis, and these meetings provide the last opportunity for the United States to request supplemental CUEs under the Montreal Protocol process for calendar year 2013. In addition, these are the meetings in which the CUEs nominated for 2014 will be reviewed and approved.

Although significant resources have been expended to find viable alternatives to methyl bromide over the last 10 years, no single alternative has been found to replace it. In fact, very few alternatives have been identified, and farmers who switched to some alternatives are finding that certain pests are reemerging in their fields.

In addition to the re-emergence of certain pests, U.S. sales of iodomethane were recently suspended by its manufacturer. Iodomethane was anticipated to be a significant replacement for methyl bromide. Many growers who were planning to switch to iodomethane have been left stranded because they do not have access to sufficient levels of CUEs or any CUEs. For example, EPA and the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC) reduced the 2013 CUE for field strawberries by 21% due to the availability of iodomethane.¹ The expected availability of

¹ October 2011 MBTOC Report on CUNs: Final Report, p. 34

iodomethane also was a consideration in EPA's review and nomination of CUEs for 2014. Growers who grow crops that qualify as "critical uses" are now very concerned about their lack of access to a sufficient supply of methyl bromide or a safe, effective alternative.

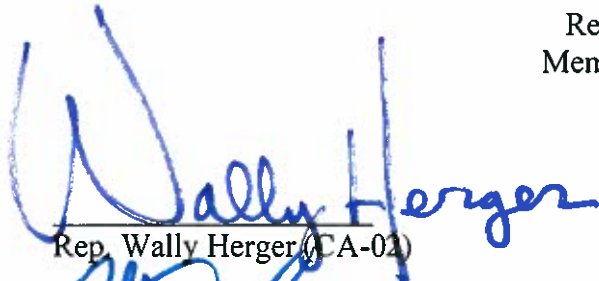
We recommend that during the upcoming meetings of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, the State Department and the U.S. delegation pursue supplemental CUEs to account for re-emerging pest pressures and the CUE reductions that were made based on the availability of iodomethane.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue for growers in our states. We hope that you will consider all available means to ensure that growers and users have sufficient access to methyl bromide for critical agricultural production.

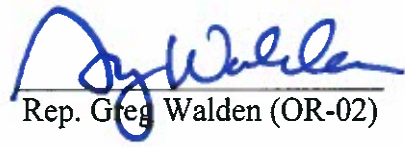
Sincerely,



Renee L. Ellmers
Member of Congress



Rep. Wally Herger (CA-02)



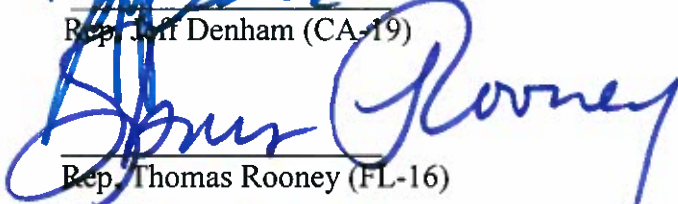
Rep. Greg Walden (OR-02)



Rep. Jeff Denham (CA-19)



Rep. Andy Harris (MD-01)



Rep. Thomas Rooney (FL-16)



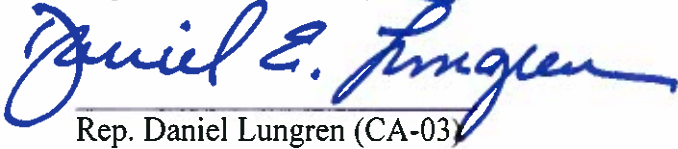
Rep. Walter Jones (NC-03)



Rep. Dennis Cardoza (CA-18)



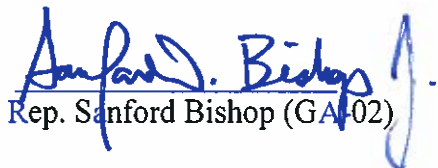
Rep. Devin Nunes (CA-21)



Rep. Daniel Lungren (CA-03)



Rep. Jim Costa (CA-20)



Rep. Sanford Bishop (GA-02)



Rep. David Scott (GA-13)


Rep. Tim Huelskamp (KS-01)


Rep. Martha Roby (AL-02)


Rep. Vicky Hartzler (MO-04)


Rep. Steve Southerland (FL-02)


Rep. Richard Nugent (FL-05)


Rep. Austin Scott (GA-08)


Rep. Doc Hastings (WA-04)

Cc: The Honorable Lisa Jackson, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
The Honorable Thomas Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture