



April 12, 2022

Ms. Samantha Power
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20523

Dear Administrator Power:

On behalf of the U.S. sorghum industry, I commend the Biden Administration for its commitment to combatting world hunger. As the war in Ukraine has resulted in record high global food prices, the number of individuals facing food insecurity has drastically increased. U.S. sorghum farmers have been a steadfast partner in the United States' efforts to feed the world's most vulnerable and we stand ready to aid in the efforts to address the mounting food crisis.

According to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Monthly Food Price Index, world food prices in March surged 12.6 percent with the FAO's Cereal Price Index increasing 17.1 percent, the highest levels on record.¹ As you are well aware, spikes in food prices are felt most in countries where food costs make up a large share of consumer budgets.

In Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, where sorghum is staple food in many countries, the situation is exacerbated by severe drought and conflict. Three consecutive failed rainy seasons in the Horn of Africa, have decimated crops leaving an estimated 13 million people in need of food assistance.² Meanwhile, West Africa is on the verge of its worst food crisis in a decade, with 27 million people in a state of hunger, a number that could increase by 11 million over the next few months aid organizations warn.³

As an action plan is formulated to address the worsening situation, we urge the U.S. Agency for International Development, in coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to proactively tender grain offers this month. In preparation for the harvesting of this year's sorghum crop, which begins in July, grain traders are emptying stocks from the 2021 crop year. With the large premium in old crop grain prices, we do not expect old crop grain to be held past May 1.

In order to provide crucial aid to the world's hungry, we strongly encourage the Biden Administration to factor the cyclical nature of U.S. agriculture production into its decision making and act swiftly. The U.S. sorghum industry is prepared to assist and looks forward to furthering our partnership.

Sincerely,

Tim Lust
CEO
National Sorghum Producers

cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Ms. Kelliann Blazek

¹ <https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>

² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/02/1111472>

³ <https://westafrica.oxfam.org/en/latest/press-release/west-africa-faces-its-worst-food-crisis-ten-years-over-27-million-people>