

FEBRUARY 17, 2026

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SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

U.S., Taiwan Sign Reciprocal Trade Agreement

- On February 12, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) [announced](#) the signing of the U.S.-Taiwan Agreement on Reciprocal Trade.
- The Agreement includes several measures to reduce and address barriers affecting trade in food and agricultural products. According to the [tariff schedule](#), Taiwan's 7.5% tariff on cherries will be eliminated immediately upon entry into force of the agreement.
- The agreement will enter into force after both parties confirm in writing that they have completed their required internal approval processes. It will become effective the day after the second (final) notification is received.

USDA Announces Assistance for Specialty Crop Producers

- On February 13, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [announced](#) a new \$1 billion Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers (ASCF) Program to provide one-time bridge payments to specialty crop and sugar producers not covered under the [Farmer Bridge Assistance \(FBA\) Program](#).
- According to USDA, the program is intended to help offset market disruptions, elevated input costs, persistent inflation, and export losses linked to unfair foreign trade practices.
- The \$1 billion initiative, authorized under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act and administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), will provide one-time payments based on 2025 planted acreage for a broad range of specialty crops, including cherries.
- Producers are required to report 2025 acres by 5:00 p.m. ET on March 13, 2026. Commodity-specific payment rates are expected by the end of March, and crop insurance linkage is not required.

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

EU South Africa and China Sign Framework Agreement

- South Africa recently [announced](#) the signing of a Framework Agreement with China, setting up the finalization of a Economic Partnership for Shared Prosperity (CAEPA). While details of the deal have yet to be released, it is expected that it will see broad tariff reductions and increased investment commitments on the part of China.
- South Africa's statement indicates that both countries are seeking to conclude an Early Harvest Agreement (EHA) by the end of March 2026. This EHA would see tariff reductions prior to the formal ratification of the finalized CAEPA.

**A REPORT FOR
THE CALIFORNIA
CHERRY BOARD**

Argentina Updates National Fruit Fly Framework

- On February 11, Argentina's National Service of Agrifood Health and Quality (SENASA) published [Resolution 137/2026](#) in the Official Gazette, introducing a comprehensive update to the country's [National Fruit Fly Program \(Procem\)](#) (both links in Spanish).
- The Resolution consolidates and modernizes more than twenty prior regulations, reflecting technical advances and current pest conditions. It clarifies the commodities covered under surveillance and mitigation requirements and establishes technical criteria for recognizing specific production establishments or defined areas as free of fruit flies.
- The Resolution will enter into force 30 working days after publication. SENASA [announced](#) (in Spanish) that the reform aims to reinforce the competitiveness of Argentina's fruit and vegetable sectors, emphasizing prevention, early detection of absent species, and the maintenance of protected areas through large-scale integrated management.

