OCTOBER 23, 2026

After Discussions with Cabinet Officials, Senator Collins Announces Certain Tariff Exemptions for Agricultural Producers in Maine

Additional exemptions will benefit Maine's blueberry, potato, apple, and seaweed industries

BANGOR, ME – U.S. Senator Susan Collins announced today that nine categories of products crucial for Maine's agricultural industries, including blueberry, potato, apple, and seaweed producers, will be exempted from U.S. tariffs on Canada. These additional exemptions come after Senator Collins' continued conversations with Administration officials, including U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, about the toll tariffs are taking on Maine families, businesses, farmers, and growers.

This announcement expands the list of tariff exemptions Senator Collins has already secured, including pulp, road salt, and cement which provided relief to Maine's municipalities and construction businesses. Canada also previously exempted American seafood from its retaliatory tariffs, providing relief to Maine's fisheries.

"These producers are a vital part of our state's economy and support our rural and coastal communities. Many of our farmers and growers rely on specialized equipment, packaging materials, and other products from Canada that are either unavailable from American suppliers or cannot be replaced without incurring significant expense," **said Senator Collins**. *"In my repeated conversations with Ambassador Greer, Secretary Lutnick, and other senior Administration officials, I have asked for tariff relief for these important products and stressed the burdens additional costs impose on Maine businesses and families. I will continue working directly with Administration officials to seek additional relief from tariffs and encourage a broader trade agreement with Canada, our neighbor, ally and largest trading partner."*

Specifically, the nine categories of products receiving exemptions include:

1. Corrugated paper or paperboard cartons and boxes
2. Plastic boxes, cases, crates, and similar items
3. Plastic packing bags and sacks
4. Refrigeration and freezing equipment
5. Agricultural cleaning, sorting, and grading machinery
6. Filling, sealing, closing, and labeling machinery
7. Packing and wrapping machinery
8. Non-adhesive plates, sheets, film, foil and strip
9. Seaweed and algae products for human consumption

For many Maine businesses and farms, products imported from Canada are essential to operations and cannot be affordably replaced with U.S. alternatives. For example, Maine's wild blueberry growers rely on specialized harvesting boxes from Canada that are designed to work with their existing and costly processing equipment. Similarly, the American supplier of certain cardboard totes used across the agricultural industry recently discontinued production, leaving producers with no choice but to turn to Canada.

These products are also used by Maine's potato and apple growers during the harvesting process and in bringing their products to market. Additionally, as the demand for seaweed products in the United States grows, a tariff on Canadian seaweed has put dozens of Maine jobs at risk. The removal of this tariff will help Maine companies succeed in this emerging industry.

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