

A bipartisan group of Florida's congressional delegation, led by U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio and Rep. Al Lawson, have filed a Section 301 petition on behalf of the state's fruit and vegetable producers.

"For too long, specialty crop growers across the U.S. have faced the devastating effects of unfair imports from Mexico," said Mike Joyner, president of the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association.

"The urgency for immediate, effective and enforceable relief cannot be overstated to support a U.S.-grown food supply and restore market fairness. The time to act is now."

Under the Trade Act of 1974, [the petition requests](#) the U.S. Trade Representative to "conduct an investigation into the flood of imported seasonal and perishable agricultural products from Mexico."

It details the history of government subsidies to Mexico's fruit and vegetable sector, which the group says are almost solely responsible for the corresponding decline in Florida production of fresh fruits and vegetables.

"This is an unfortunate, but necessary, step toward correcting the unfair trade practices which are driving our farm families out of business," stated Florida Farm Bureau President Jeb S. Smith.

This action follows fact-finding investigations by the U.S. International Trade Commission under Sections 201 and 332 of the Trade Act of 1974 for select commodities. These investigations were part of [a larger suite of commitments](#) jointly announced by the U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. departments of Commerce and Agriculture in September 2020. The plan outlined specific actions each agency would take, and more than two years later, some of those commitments remain unfulfilled.

"The unfair trading practices have to be addressed with timely, effective, and durable measures in order to protect our nation's food security," said Kenneth Parker, Executive Director of the Florida Strawberry Growers Association.

"Specialty crop farmers have done their best to hold onto the ground they have in the market, but now is the time for relief in order to ensure domestically grown produce stays on the grocery store shelves."

Together, the Florida Farm Bureau, Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association, and Florida Strawberry Growers Association commend the bipartisan support and commitment of

Florida's congressional delegation in seeking trade relief for Florida growers.