

Conclusions

The movement toward a more market-oriented and orderly global agricultural trading system is important for the United States because of the large and increasing role of trade in U.S. agricultural production and food consumption. Expanding export markets provides an outlet for U.S. agricultural producers as technological advances and increased productivity lead to higher levels of production. For consumers, trade rules help to ensure access to a safe, varied, and abundant year-round supply of food.

Global agricultural policy distortions impose substantial long-term costs on U.S. producers, consumers, and the world economy. U.S. agricultural tariffs and subsidies are relatively low, suggesting that U.S. domestic adjustments to its own reforms are likely to be small, relative to the potentially large benefits to the United States from global reform. Furthermore, U.S. reforms of its own policies within a global framework can help to ensure the overall, long-term competitiveness of the U.S. farm sector in world markets.