

Trump administration to ban Chinese purchases of US farmland

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In a further step toward war with China, the Trump administration announced Tuesday it would ban purchases of US farmland by Chinese nationals and other “adversaries.” The announcement was made by US Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins at a press conference held on the steps of the USDA building in Washington, D.C.

Rollins was joined by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, Attorney General Pam Bondi, and trade advisor Peter Navarro. Also present were members of Congress and several governors.

Rollins said the administration would work with state governments and use executive actions to halt the purchases and claw back land already owned by Chinese entities. This is part of a seven-point “National Agriculture Security Action Plan” that includes purging Chinese nationals and those from other “countries of concern,” such as Russia and Iran, from contracts with the USDA.

The *New York Post* reported approvingly: “At least 700 foreign nationals in ‘countries of concern’ like China will be swiftly kicked off of contracts and research agreements with the USDA—and further regulatory actions will remove more than 550 concerning foreign entities.”

According to the USDA’s own data, Chinese investors currently own only 265,000 acres of US land, about half of which is tied to a single company—Smithfield Foods, which was acquired in 2013 by WH Group, a Chinese conglomerate led by Tycoon Wan Long. Chinese ownership of US farmland has actually dropped sharply in recent years, declining from 384,000 acres in 2021.

The ban on Chinese land purchases and other measures to combat “agroterrorism” and China’s

allegedly nefarious intrigues were presented as critical to US national security, i.e., the interests of US imperialism around the world.

In language designed to instill fear in the population of “communist” China, Rollins and Hegseth sought to present US agriculture in a military context, part of the effort to place all aspects of American society on a war footing.

“American agriculture is not just about feeding our families,” Rollins said, “but about protecting our nation and standing up to foreign adversaries who are buying our farmland, stealing our research, and creating dangerous vulnerabilities in the very systems that sustain us.”

Hegseth said, “No longer can foreign adversaries assume we’re not watching.” He added that the Pentagon would move to bar sales of farmland near military bases, saying the move would help secure the US supply of food for soldiers, especially in a “contingency,” i.e., war.

Implying the China is already waging war on the US, Navarro told the press that “kinetic warfare” is “not the first choice of our rivals anymore.”

He continued: “Rather, it is things like sending us seeds or trying to steal our seeds or trying to change the seeds. It is acquiring our supply chain in agriculture. It’s setting up spy shops on land next to military bases.”

The 12-page National Agriculture Security Action Plan states: “This Action Plan serves as the launching point for USDA to work in further unison with governors, state legislators, and other partners to fully integrate agriculture into the broader national security enterprise over the coming months and years.”

The plan’s seven points include:

- Banning the purchase of American farmland by

Chinese or other foreign entities, and clawing back farmland that has already been purchased,

- Fortifying domestic supply chains and improving security surrounding American agricultural practices and technology,
- Protecting critical agricultural infrastructure,
- Implementing America First policies throughout every level of the USDA,
- Protecting and researching animal health and studying disease.

These developments bring into sharp relief the cases of three Chinese researchers at the University of Michigan who have been witch-hunted and charged by federal authorities for allegedly attempting to smuggle proscribed agricultural materials into the US. Yunqing Jian and Zunyong Liu are charged with smuggling *Fusarium graminearum*, a common agricultural fungus. Jian has been imprisoned in Michigan for more than a month pending her trial and her boyfriend Liu has been banned from reentering the US. More recently, Chengxuan Han was arrested and jailed on charges of smuggling common non-hazardous biological materials (*C. elegans* roundworms and plasmids) and making false statements.

The *New York Post* reported Tuesday that it had asked Agriculture Secretary Rollins on Monday about the two Chinese researchers charged with smuggling *Fusarium graminearum* and she said, “We’re tracking and very well aware of the Michigan case, but there are others as well.”

On Tuesday, Attorney General Pam Bondi told the press, “Both of them have ties to the CCP,” adding, “Just days later we arrested another Chinese citizen for sending packages of concealed biological materials into the United States.”



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