



News Release

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Potato Growers Support TPP Agreement

Washington, D.C., Nov. 5, 2015 – Based on a review of the recently released Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement text, the National Potato Council (NPC) strongly supports the trade deal reached with Australia, Brunei, Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. NPC urges Congress to quickly complete their review of TPP and approve the agreement.

Currently 20 percent of the potatoes produced in the U.S. are exported as fresh, dehydrated or frozen processed potatoes. Over the last 10 years potato exports have grown by 56 percent in volume and were valued at \$1.7 billion in 2014. The completion of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements has been a key driver in that export growth. Congressional approval of this agreement with the TPP trading block will provide significant opportunities to expand the export growth trend. Additionally approval of the TPP will allow discussions to commence to include Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand in the agreement. These markets would significantly increase the benefits to U.S. potato producers.

TPP includes tariff reductions that are critical to growth in exports of fresh, dehydrated and frozen potato products. Without those tariff reductions competitors that have or are currently negotiating deals with the TPP trading block have a strong competitive advantage. “The U.S. potato industry can compete with worldwide growers, processors and distributors if the playing field is level,” said NPC Vice President for Trade Cully Easterday. “The TPP tariff reductions in our key markets including Japan and Vietnam allow us to go head-to-head with our foreign competitors and successfully win the business.”

The TPP also includes critically important provisions to improve the process for resolving phytosanitary issues based on science in a timely manner. Too often potatoes and potato products are denied access to foreign markets based on phytosanitary issues that are not justified by science. “The TPP agreement takes an important step in addressing the very difficult issue of resolving plant health disputes by focusing on scientific analysis and creating a more certain dispute resolution process,” said Easterday.

NPC applauds the hard work done by U.S. trade officials to complete this landmark trade deal. The potato industry will benefit greatly from the opportunities the agreement provides.

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The National Potato Council is the advocate for the economic well-being of U.S. potato growers on federal legislative, regulatory, environmental, and trade issues. NPC supports the U.S. potato industry by monitoring issues affecting the strength and viability of the potato industry, influencing regulators and legislators on issues crucial to the industry's long term success, ensuring fair market access for potatoes and potato products, and bringing the unique issues and interests of diverse growing regions in the U.S. together on a national level.