



News Release



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U.S. Potato Growers Welcome Agreement to Include Mexico in Trans-Pacific Partnership Negotiations

Trade agreement paves the way for reciprocal access for fresh and process potatoes

(Washington, DC – June 18, 2012) – U.S. potato industry leaders applaud today's announcement by U.S. President Barack Obama and Mexican President Felipe Calderón to include Mexico in the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade negotiations. The pending agreement is currently being negotiated between Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United States. The commitments made today by the United States and Mexico create a clear path forward to establishing expanded trade in fresh potatoes between the two countries that is based on the strong science-based phytosanitary provisions envisioned by the TPP agreement.

"The decision to strengthen the trade relationship between the U.S. and Mexico is a tremendous win for growers, processors, retailers, and consumers on both sides of the border," said National Potato Council Vice President for Trade Affairs Randy Hardy, owner of Hardy Farms in Oakley, Idaho. "The agreement to include Mexico in TPP negotiations highlights the importance of a transparent regulatory system on which phytosanitary decisions can be made."

Collectively, U.S. potato exports to the original eight countries included in TPP negotiations totaled approximately \$78 million in 2010. The U.S. potato industry estimates that access to the Mexican fresh potato market could provide an additional market potential of \$150 million per year, up from the current \$30 million per year in exports.

"Today's announcement is a historic event for U.S. and Mexican potato growers and reinforces the value of science-based decision making between trading partners," said Rob Davis, United State Potato Board Co-Chairman of International Marketing and owner of RHD, Inc. in Connell, Wash. "The mutual responsibilities required by these trade negotiations puts us on a clear path forward to resolving reciprocal market access issues for table stock and processing potatoes."

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. Potato growers, along with the U.S. potato industry as a whole, directly benefit from involvement in the National Potato Council. 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. The National Potato Council is a voluntary organization supported by quota assessments from state organizations, allied industry memberships and sponsorships, and directly by potato growers through membership dues.

The mission of the United States Potato Board is to increase demand for potatoes and potato products through an integrated promotion program, thereby providing US producers with expanding markets for their production. For complete information about the programs, ROI results, resources and tools available to all members of the industry through the USPB, please visit www.uspotatoes.com. The United States Potato Board—Maximizing Return on Grower Investment.

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