



# News Release

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## **NPC Endorses USDA Undersecretary for Trade**

**Washington, D.C.** – The National Potato Council (NPC) applauds USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue for moving forward to establish the position of Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs as set forth in the 2014 Farm Bill. This position will bring unified, high level focus to key agriculture trade issues.

“With strong, focused leadership by this new Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs and continued coordination with the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the potato industry and all of U.S. agriculture will be an economic force to be reckoned with in world markets,” said NPC Executive Vice President and CEO John Keeling.

Currently twenty percent of the potatoes produced in the U.S. are exported, with Japan, Canada and Mexico being the top three markets. Overseas markets represent 73 percent of the world’s purchasing power, 87 percent of the economic growth and 95 percent of the world’s customers. An increased focus at USDA on opening new markets and expanding existing markets will play an important role in the potato industry’s continued export success. U.S. agriculture regularly contributes a net trade surplus to our economy and with a continued commitment to export growth that contribution will grow.

“An Undersecretary within USDA with experience in international trade negotiations and trade policy issues will aid in the economic growth of the U.S.,” said Keeling. “Potato growers are optimistic that this important new position will be filled quickly by an individual with those credentials.”

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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.*