

FEDERAL ISSUE

International Trade

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TRADE AND MARKETING

- *The Council supports the active and aggressive pursuit of international trade opportunities for agricultural and forestry raw and value-added products with as many countries as possible.*
- *The Council supports complete access to foreign markets and opposes trade agreements that restrict the export of agriculture and forest products.*
- *The Council supports re-instating the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) which expired in 2007, as long as all agriculture and forestry are treated equitably in trade negotiations, especially with regard to non-tariff trade barriers. (Amended 04/15)*
- *The Council opposes non-tariff trade barriers by trading partners.*
- *The Council opposes export embargoes and trade sanctions which cause adverse impacts on agricultural and forestry markets.*
- *The Council supports enforcement of anti-dumping laws for agricultural and forestry products.*
- *The Council supports defending U.S. processing practices and inspection regulations in trade negotiations.*
- *The Council supports an exchange rate component that creates a level playing field in which agriculture exports may compete.*
- *The Council recognizes the importance of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the majority of the Council's membership supports the TPP as an important step towards opening new markets for U.S. agricultural and forest products and advancing trade by lowering non-tariff barriers and other regulatory impediments. However, we urge Congress and the administration to resolve any remaining issues so that the agreement can be approved promptly. This especially includes the resolution of the carve-out of tobacco products from Investor State Dispute Settlement provisions.*
- *The Council supports the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) as they increase trade opportunities for many commodities; however, the concerns of unscientific non-tariff trade barriers need to be addressed.*
- *The Council supports continued expansion of current crop commodity exports.*
- *The Council encourages funding and assistance for domestic and foreign market development, including the Market Access Program (MAP) within the Farm Bill.*
- *The Council urges that the statutory requirements under Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) be administered with an emphasis on flexibility and minimal cost to producers and avoid adverse impacts to international trade, and furthermore, because of the potential for retaliatory action from key trading partners, the Council urges Congress to address concerns associated with COOL following repeated rulings by the World Trade Organization (WTO) against these requirements. (Amended 04/15)*

ISSUES OF CONCERN

- *Even though significant progress was made with China in 2014, when its ban on Virginia poultry was lifted, China once again prohibits U.S. poultry products due to an outbreak of avian influenza, but Virginia has had no reported cases. Other countries, including India and Russia, have bans on certain U.S. agricultural and forestry imports citing unjustified reasons related to isolated incidences.*
- *For most Virginia agriculture commodities, the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) presents the best opportunity to remove many sanitary and other non-tariff barriers to trade and eliminate import duties in the participating countries. The TPP countries represent a substantial market for Virginia products; however, the Obama Administration has included a provision that would treat the tobacco industry differently from other agricultural commodities.*

OVER

IMPACT ON AGRIBUSINESS

- Over the past few years, Virginia's agricultural exports have reached record highs:
 - \$3.19 billion in 2015
 - \$3.35 billion in 2014
 - \$2.85 billion in 2013
 - \$2.61 billion in 2012
- While the majority of Virginia's agribusinesses stand to benefit tremendously from the agreement, the TPP's treatment of tobacco affects the livelihood and well-being of Virginia's tobacco farmers and their families. The current economic and regulatory environment has already put tremendous strain on the industry and any additional disadvantage could cause irreparable damage. To exclude tobacco from the ISDS portion of the agreement only disadvantages our growers in a competitive global market. Furthermore, this sets a dangerous precedent of excluding specific commodities from certain protections.

ACTIONS REQUESTED

- We urge Congress and the administration to resolve any remaining issues so that the TPP can be approved promptly. This especially includes the resolution of the carve-out of tobacco products from Investor State Dispute Settlement provisions.
- Support negotiations of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), especially to remove unscientific non-tariff barriers many American products face in Europe.
- Support any action taken to fairly re-open trade markets that have bans on U.S. agricultural and forestry products.