

## **FEDERAL ISSUE**

### **International Trade and Market Access**

#### **TRADE AND MARKET ACCESS**

- *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, including Cuba and NAFTA. (Amended 4/17)*
- *The Council supports complete access to foreign markets and opposes trade agreements and other actions that restrict the export of agriculture and forest products.*
- *The Council supports Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), as long as all agriculture and forestry are treated equitably in trade negotiations, especially with regard to non-tariff trade barriers. (Amended 4/17)*
- *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 an exchange rate component that creates a level playing field in which agriculture exports may compete.*
- *The Council supports expanding US agricultural and forestry trade through multilateral trade deals as long as all agriculture and forestry are treated equitably in trade negotiations, especially with regard to non-tariff trade barriers.*
- *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. (Amended 04/13)*
- *Shipment of Grain - The Council supports reform of the Jones Act that prohibits shipping of grain from one U.S. port to another using other than a U.S. bottomed vessel*

#### **ISSUES OF CONCERN**

- While significant progress was made with China in 2014, when its ban on U.S. poultry was lifted, China once again prohibits U.S. poultry products due to an outbreak of avian influenza, even though 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.
- As the renegotiation of NAFTA is being considered, the benefits of NAFTA for Virginia farms and forests have grown significantly since its enactment. Since 1996, Virginia's agricultural and forestry exports to Canada have increased by almost 400% (From \$58.4M to \$296.5M) and to Mexico by 1335% (From \$7.9M to \$113.6M).
- Even though NAFTA has been very beneficial, there are still improvements that could be made. Including Canada's shield of its dairy farmers from foreign competition via tariffs and regulations. Improving this could make Canada a more significant market for American dairy products as they currently are not, while Mexico is now the largest importer of U.S. dairy products.
- Since NAFTA was enacted, the use of biotechnology has grown substantially in the U.S. agriculture industry. Today, many farmers in the United States use biotechnology in production. This technology is used and traded globally. The asynchronous approval of these products needlessly affects the entire agricultural biotechnology value-chain. If a product is commercialized, trade disruption may occur, even though the product has completed a risk assessment and been approved in one or more countries. Similarly, asynchronous approvals have contributed to the delayed

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introduction of new technologies for use by agricultural producers, resulting in lost opportunities for farmers and product developers, and other participants in the value-chain, to capitalize on the introduction of new biotech traits.

- Committing to provide transparency on the trade of agricultural products derived from biotechnology, and providing for more information sharing, including when low-level presence of biotechnology material is detected in a shipment of agricultural commodities or food products.

### **IMPACT ON AGRIBUSINESS**

- Over the past few years, Virginia's agricultural exports have reached record highs:
  - **\$2.75 billion in 2016** (*Volume of trade increased but due to low commodity prices the cash value declined*)
  - **\$3.19 billion in 2015**
  - **\$3.35 billion in 2014**

### **ACTIONS REQUESTED**

- We urge Congress and the administration to proceed with the renegotiation of NAFTA carefully and methodically and to seek agricultural and forestry improvements with any new trade deal with Canada and Mexico. We also urge Congress and the administration to seek stakeholder input as a new trade deal or renegotiation takes place.
- Support any action taken to open new trade markets and fairly re-open trade markets that have bans on U.S. agricultural and forestry products.