Urges Administration to Move Forward on Responsible Trade Agreements

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee's Department Operations, Oversight, and Credit Subcommittee, today questioned Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk regarding the status of agricultural trade.

"Agriculture remains one of the few bright spots in the American economy," Fortenberry said. "Many are expecting record yields this year, and we are on course to enjoy a very strong trade surplus in agriculture due to increased exports. The world demand for food produced by American farm families is growing. We must move forward on pending trade agreements that increase market opportunities for American producers while ensuring that affected persons will be treated fairly."

During the full Agriculture Committee hearing, Fortenberry urged Representative Kirk and Secretary Vilsack to continue pushing forward for the finalization of pending agreements with Korea, Columbia, and Panama. He also thanked Kirk for his aggressive actions in opening pork markets for American farmers in recent years, and encouraged continued examination of the relationship between economic progress and human rights within trade negotiations.

Fortenberry has served on the Agriculture committee for six years. He is also a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

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