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PRESS RELEASE

Philippine Delegates Experience Minnesota Family Farms

Minnesota – October 19, 2011 – As demand for crops continues to grow globally, farmers are meeting the challenge through the use of technology and international friendships. Minnesota soybean farmers, Steve Hulke, Joel Schruers and Gene Stoel, welcomed five Philippine delegates onto their farms on October 18, 2011. The group, consisting of the Philippines' top soybean importers, wholesalers and distributors, experienced first-hand how these local farmers set the bar high in terms of crop production.

Lauren Chua with Simon Enterprises Inc. in the Philippines stated, "For me, the most exciting thing was riding on the combine to see how farmers harvest the crops and to see what benefits technology brings to the farm - back in the Philippines it is still with a caribou (cow). Here it is three jobs in one; it cuts down the plant, separates the seed from the plant and then the plant material is placed back on the ground, at the same time holding the seeds for the truck. This experience has made it easier for us to explain the whole process and we are more sure of the quality and trust in our new relationships with Minnesota farmers."

The Philippines is an important U.S. customer for soybeans. In 2010 they purchased 957,514 metric tons of soybean meal valued at \$360 million dollars. The Filipinos are trending towards higher protein diets, and soy is the leading source of protein in animal diets. Every other row of Minnesota soybeans is exported. Minnesota produced 329 million bushels of soybeans and exported \$2.2 billion worth of soybeans and soybean products in 2010; it is Minnesota's number one exported value crop.

"Any consumer, overseas or here in Minnesota, is interested in where their food comes from. If they buy from a company or an individual, many consumers want to put a face with the product. By visiting my farm, they can see that I am a family farm that implements proven management practices to conserve the land for the next generation while producing a safe, quality product for them to use," stated Joel Schreurs, Lincoln County farmer and Minnesota Soybean Growers Association director.

The purpose of this trade team visit was to develop relationships with farmers and show the team first-hand Minnesota's high quality crops. This tour allowed buyers from the Philippines to see exactly what they are buying: an abundant, secure, safe, clean and quality product for their families, companies and fellow countrymen. "We are helping provide a high-quality, safe and affordable food supply for our neighbors down the road and across the world. We value the opportunity to show our customers the practices we use to make this possible," says Steve Hulke, Nicollet County farmer and Minnesota Soybean Growers Association director.

The needs and concerns of consumers also play a large role in how farmers run their businesses. Gene Stoel, Murray County farmer and Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council chairman stated, "As farmers, we try to work together as a group and talk amongst ourselves to try to figure out what consumers are looking for." He encourages people who have questions or concerns about where the food at the grocery store comes from, to ask their grocers and contact the farmers who grow it. "We'd be more than happy to have consumers talk to us."

USDA forecasts that fiscal year 2011 exports will reach a record \$137 billion, \$22 billion higher than the previous record set in 2008 and \$28 billion above 2010. Strong agricultural exports contribute to the positive U.S. trade balance, create jobs and boost economic growth. This year, the U.S. will harvest approximately 3 billion bushels of soybeans.

Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) arranges numerous international trips each year, with teams coming from countries such as Japan, India, Korea, China and Mexico. Team members visit the United States to learn about farming, crop quality, planting, animal feed and advancements in biotechnology.

Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA) is a non-profit, farmer-controlled membership organization working to assure profitable soybean farming by monitoring government policies, educating the public about agriculture and supporting research and market development activities. The organization works with the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) to share the R.E.A.L. Story (Responsible, Ethical, Agriculture for Life).

Read R.E.A.L farm stories straight from Minnesota farmers by visiting <http://realstory.mnsoybean.org>.

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