



Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council

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PRESS RELEASE

CHINESE TRADE TEAM VISITS ZIEGLER FARM NEAR GOOD THUNDER

Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council takes opportunity to show overseas customers value of buying Minnesota soybeans

MANKATO, MN—May 3, 2011- Blue Earth County soybean farmer, Earl Ziegler and his wife Lynette, welcomed to their farm several trade team members from China on April 29. “Every fourth row of Minnesota soybeans is exported to China. They are an important customer of ours, and it is important for us to show them the land on which we grow these crops, and the buildings in which we house our livestock, so they understand our passion to produce the safest food in the world,” Ziegler stated.

The Ziegler farm visit was part of an 11-day trip throughout the Midwest for the Chinese Feed Study Team. They learned about soybean production, feed mills, soybean crush plants, and exchanged ideas with U.S. crop and livestock farmers. The trip was sponsored by the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC).

“For many of these Chinese feed mill CEOs and technical managers, it is their first time out of the country,” explained Greg Olwig, USSEC Marketing Manager.

Sunny Zhang, Livestock Program Manager for the United Soybean Board (USB) and the American Soybean Association (ASA), translated for the visitors, “We are excited and impressed with the United States, especially impressed with how clean everything is on the farms and in the feed mills we have visited. We love all the green grass and blue sky.”

Ziegler is thrilled to hear this response to his farm, “As farmers we practice responsible farming and continually strive to adopt new technologies and practices that sustain natural resources, while producing a safe and abundant food supply.”

“These 15 trade team members have a demand for 28 million bushels of soybeans a year to use as feed for livestock; that’s seven percent of Minnesota’s soybean exports,” explained Olwig. China’s pork production is six times larger than that of the U.S. but they have limited cropland and only 13,500 feed mills to process grains. China continues to look to the United States for crops and processed grains to feed their livestock. Because of this growing demand, Minnesota farmers look to public research and biotechnology to help increase their soybean yields while sustaining natural resources.

John Guse, Blue Earth County soybean farmer explained the importance of research and technology, “The partnership between scientists, education and farming is vital in meeting world food and energy needs, sustaining natural resources and building our economy. With the help of public research, the average Minnesota farmer feeds 155 people, and agriculture is the second largest employer in the state.”

U.S. farmers embrace technological advancements as a way to prevent unnecessary stress on the land and the crops. For example, GPS systems on tractors allow for more accurate pest and weed management and more accurate placement of fertilizers. It means fewer trips across the land, less impact on the land and less time and money invested by the farmer. “That machine is awesome!” exclaimed one trade team member after

riding in a sprayer.

Olwig thanked Minnesota Soybean for organizing the Ziegler farm tour, “ MN Soybean is probably one of the premier state organizations in setting up events like this. These team members can meet with ten to 15 farmers and leave with a good feeling that their soybeans are coming from reliable and sustainable farmers.”

The afternoon farm tour concluded with Charlie Poster, Assistant Commissioner for Minnesota Department of Agriculture, showing his appreciation for the business these people do, and thanking the trade team members for taking time to visit our state.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) helps arrange numerous international visits with teams coming from countries like Japan, India, China and Taiwan. Team members visit the United States to build relationships with farmers and their families while learning more about farming, planting, livestock food, and the biotechnology advancements in the United States.

The Blue Earth County Corn and Soybean Growers Association is affiliated with the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association, 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 to share the R.E.A.L. Story (Responsible, Ethical Agriculture for Life).

For more information or to set up an interview please contact Jessica Dornink, 952-446-5393 or jdornink@wideopenthinking.com

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

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