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PRESS RELEASE

Indonesia, Taiwan & China Delegates Tour Minnesota Family Farms

Minnesota - October 11, 2011 - Senator Franken joined a 6-member Indonesia, Taiwan & China Crop Sampling Tour in Benson, MN on October 7, 2011. The group, which included representatives from the companies: Japfa Comfeed Indonesia (JCI), Indopro Nusa Pacific, Chinatex, Great Wall Enterprise, Liangyou Group Shanghai and Cofco Beijing, along with government officials, traveled the western side of Minnesota to take samples of crops and meet with farmers. During their trip to the U.S., the trade team toured farms throughout the Midwest, including Bob Worth's by Lake Benton, Joel Schreurs' nearby Tyler, George Goblisch's near Vesta, Steve Brusven's neighboring Cottonwood, Mike O'Leary's near Danvers, Paul Freeman's by Starbuck, Vernon Pooch's nearby Farwell, Lance Peterson's neighboring Underwood and Kurt Krueger's close to Rothsay.

"I was pleased to join Minnesota's soybean growers in their meetings with Asian trade officials and to help them tour a great Minnesota product, our soybeans," said Senator Franken. "Part of my job as Minnesota Senator is to promote Minnesota farm products and help expand demand for them, not only in Asia but around the world. These face-to-face meetings allowed us to, once again, demonstrate that Minnesota soybean producers provide a reliable and safe supply of top-quality soybeans, and to build long-lasting relationships with some important trading partners. I was very happy to be part of this important effort."

The purpose of the trade team visit was to develop relationships with farmers, show the team first-hand Minnesota's high quality crops, allow them to take samples of crops and visit farms across the Pacific Northwest. The samples of soybeans taken during their visit will be tested for moisture, protein, amino acids and oil. These samples allow the major feed and food buyers for these three countries to see exactly what they are buying; an abundant, secure, safe, clean and quality product for their families, companies and fellow countrymen.

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 alone exported \$2.2 billion worth of soybeans and soybean products in 2010; it is Minnesota's number one exported value crop.

“Welcoming trade teams to walk our fields and take samples demonstrates that Minnesota soybean growers have a commitment to our customers to provide the highest quality product possible,” stated George Goblisch, Vesta, MN farmer and Minnesota Soybean Growers Association secretary. “Consumers around the world are our number one customers. With over half of what we produce sent overseas, relationships are important. Building friendships with our customers allows people to put a face to the product. They are able to place more trust in us once they see how we produce a quality product for them by using technology and good management practices.”

The representatives, that included delegates from some of the world’s most important soybean importers, learned about the high quality soybeans grown in Minnesota and the conservation practices implemented by Minnesota farmers to preserve the land. “We as farmers work hard to keep topsoil and nutrients in the fields and practice responsible, ethical agriculture for life, because we want to continue to keep the land safe and healthy for our customers and future generations,” noted Bob Worth, Lake Minnesota farmer and American Soybean Association director.

Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) arranges numerous international visits 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 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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