



**Minnesota Soybean**  
151 Saint Andrews Court, Suite 710  
Mankato, MN 56001  
888-896-9678 - [www.mnsoybean.org](http://www.mnsoybean.org)



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **International Connections Made in Worthington Minnesota** *Thailand and China Representatives Visit Nobles County Farmers*

Worthington, MN – September 1, 2011 – The green soybean fields of Worthington, MN were one of the many stops an international trade team from Thailand and China made on their three-week tour of the United States. The representatives, Mr. Boonchai Pihtayanukul, Mr. Songpoom Thitipunya and Mr. Olan Ocharoen work for Chavoen Pokphand (CP), one of the largest feed milling companies in the world.

The Widboom farm was their first Minnesota stop. While on the farm, the team viewed the cattle finishing operation and the feedstuffs. They also had a chance to discuss with the Nobles County Corn and Soybean Growers the reason they came on the trip and what they have been able to see so far.

Mr. Olan Ocharoen, CP Thailand Deputy General Manager stated, “I work for CP, a company of around 400,000 people. We are curious about the crop conditions here in the U.S. – we are concerned about how planting, management practices and yields are coming along. We buy the raw material from you — soybeans, soybean meal and DDGs.”

Olan continued, “We heard they (crop conditions) were not so good. Being here and talking with farmers – some areas are better than others.”

CP Thailand purchases about 40 percent of the 300,000 metric tons of soybeans the United States shipped to Thailand in 2010. The country also imports 80,000 metric tons of soybean meal, which is used mainly for livestock feed.

Senior Vice President of CP, Mr. Boonchai Pihtayanukul, was very excited, as it was his first time to the United States. He stated, “I buy supply for about 70 feed mills in China – this trip has shown me the real thing when it comes to crop conditions.”

In 2010, every fourth row of Minnesota soybeans was exported to China. All of the exports were in the form of livestock and poultry feed to help meet the country’s growing appetite for protein-rich meats.

The afternoon in Worthington continued with tours of Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA) Director Matt Widboom’s soybean fields to view conditions, Nobles County Corn and Soybean Growers Secretary Tim Hansberger’s farm for

rides in a tracked tractor, and a steak supper at MSGA Director Bill Gordon's home.

MSGA Director Matt Widboom stated, "We jump at the chance to be hosting trade teams from around the world. It is extremely important. We must take the time to build relationships with our customers overseas. It's a chance for us to sell ourselves — to show them we are family businesses that take pride in what we grow."

The international trade team is in the final portion of the three-week tour of the Midwest, which originated in Illinois. Overall, the group enjoyed their visit and being able to see the crops for themselves.

The trade visit was sponsored in part by the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) and AGP to organize farm tours so that international trade teams can learn about farming, soybeans, production and processing advancements in the United States. Minnesota is a leader in research, production and export of food-grade soybeans.

The Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council is made up of an elected board of 15 soybean producers from across the state. The mission of the council is to invest soybean checkoff dollars in well- defined research, marketing, education and commercialization programs designed to increase demand and thereby improve the profitability of Minnesota's soybean farmers.

The Nobles 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 Brittany Nussbaum, 612-412-7600 [bnussbaum@wideopenthinking.com](mailto:bnussbaum@wideopenthinking.com).

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

###