

## **Family Farming and Trade Policy 2015 Special Order of Business**

The current attitude towards trade agreements demonstrated by U.S. negotiators does not prioritize the interests of family farmers. Trade negotiators consistently use agriculture as bait to achieve favorable trade agreements for other sectors of the economy.

American family farmers sell their products in a global marketplace, which is dominated by a small number of multinational firms. The deeply flawed trade agenda has opened domestic markets to cheap, often low-quality food, fuel and fiber products that have created a huge trade deficit. Not enough emphasis is placed upon the huge trade deficit the United States has amassed every year for the past forty years.

Generally, the U.S. agriculture sector has a trade surplus. However, under the first three years of the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, despite its promises of increased agricultural trade, U.S. exports to Korea of agricultural goods have stagnated at zero percent. At the same time, the overall goods trade deficit with Korea has increased 84 percent, or \$12.7 billion.

In 2014, the total trade deficit totaled \$505 billion, representing a three percent drag on our GDP. Estimates by economists state that eliminating the entire U.S. trade deficit would create 6.3 million jobs.

International trade is an important part of successful family farming in the United States, but trade is not an end unto itself. In order for greater economic prosperity to come to U.S. agriculture and the broader economy, our national trade deficit must be addressed.

NFU opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership as it currently stands because it uses the same failed blueprint as past trade agreements.

NFU opposes legislation that would enact Trade Promotion Authority, or "Fast Track," for negotiating trade rules. Congress' constitutional authority to set the terms of trade agreements, especially as these trade agreements expand to cover more domestic rules, must be restored.