



Washington Association of Wheat Growers

109 E. First Ave. • Ritzville, WA • 99169 • Phone (509) 659-0610 • Fax (509) 659-4302

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 22, 2018

Contact: Michelle Hennings (509) 659-0610

WASHINGTON WHEAT GROWERS WARN TRUMP TPP WITHDRAWAL COULD PROVE CATASTROPHIC

TPP Withdrawal Threatens the Stability of the U.S. Agriculture Industry

(February 22, 2018, Ritzville, WA) When President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the agricultural industry warned that the consequences could be dire for our country's farmers. That warning appears to be coming true, as the remaining 11 TPP countries are close to formalizing the deal without the U.S., threatening the Pacific Northwest wheat industry's access to vital Pacific Rim markets, especially Japan.

"If the TPP agreement is signed without the U.S. being a part of it, U.S. wheat will be put at a \$65 per metric ton disadvantage. Both Australia and Canada, two of our closest competitors, will see lower tariffs, making those countries' wheat much more attractive than U.S. wheat," said Michelle Hennings, executive director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers. "We could lose a huge part of our market. With more than 90 percent of the Pacific Northwest's wheat being exported, much of it to TPP countries, our growers could experience a catastrophic loss of sales, depressing farm gate prices even lower than they are today."

U.S. Wheat Associates estimates that Japan's market share, the 2nd largest market of Washington wheat, would fall by 62.5 million bushels annually, resulting in increased stocks and lowering baseline wheat futures price by 50 cents a bushel.

The wheat growers' leadership and staff continue to stress the importance of maintaining and strengthening free trade agreements, such as TPP, NAFTA and KORUS (the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement), and how vital a stable agricultural industry is to a strong, growing U.S. economy. Fair and reciprocal trade deals supported by the Administration can secure export sales to Japan and help grow sales to other TPP countries, ultimately helping American wheat farmers.

Marci Green, president of WAWG and farmer from Fairfield, WA added, "Agriculture is one of the few sectors that routinely enjoys a trade surplus. Having TPP go on without us threatens not only that surplus but the U.S. agricultural industry's stability as a whole. Farmers are already struggling with low commodity prices, as well as attacks on the farm safety net. We call upon President Trump to use his abilities to re-enter with Congress TPP and protect U.S. jobs and agriculture."

###

About WAWG: Education and outreach are the heart of Washington Association of Wheat Growers activity, all of which is aimed at helping Washington wheat families. Since 1954, WAWG has been dedicated to the enrichment of the Washington wheat industry as a nonprofit trade association, which depends on volunteers, membership dues and donations to carry out activities as representatives on the state and national levels. WAWG monitors state, transportation, research and natural resources policy and partners with the National Association of Wheat Growers to monitor national farm policy. **Visit wawg.org for more information. For more information on this or other related issues, please contact Michelle Hennings, Executive Director of the Washington Association of Wheat Growers at, 509-659-0610, michelle@wawg.org Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Washington-Association-of-Wheat-Growers-194847140538562> Twitter: @WAWheatGrowers**