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USMCA Vote Delayed

Wheat farmers disappointed in Congress' failure to vote for trade

The failure of Congress to approve the USMCA trade agreement with Mexico and Canada prior to the August recess jeopardizes trade with two of America's most reliable customers as it threatens wheat shipments to our most important market.

The Washington Grain Commission (WGC) and the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) urge Congress to schedule an expedited vote on the important trade agreement. Although the Pacific Northwest exports little grain to Mexico, wheat is traded on the world market and undermining America's No. 1 customer—Mexico—will depress prices further for all wheat farmers.

"Congress must rise above the current red/blue political environment which pits Democrats and Republicans as opposing forces, rather than as Americans with differing points of view," said Michelle Hennings, executive director of WAWG.

Glen Squires, CEO of the WGC, urged Washington's Congressional representatives to confer with their colleagues on both sides of the aisle in order to make the treaty acceptable for passage by all parties.

"Eastern Washington farmers are scraping by with wheat prices that, when adjusted for inflation, are less than they were 20 years ago. Lack of action on the USMCA treaty will force the industry to consume more of the equity in their operations in order to stay afloat," he said.

Both Washington wheat leaders criticized those who based their opposition to the treaty on not giving President Trump a legislative victory. As Hennings put it: "Trade is the fertilizer that helps the country grow. The failure to pass the USMCA treaty quickly will have the same effect on the U.S. economy as failure to provide wheat plants their necessary inputs—a paltry harvest."

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Working together to serve and improve the small grains industry of Washington