

ASA Applauds Trade Framework Agreement

The American Soybean Association (ASA) is pleased with the outcome of negotiations on a framework agreement for the Doha trade negotiations because the framework provides an opportunity to achieve significant improvement in market access for soybean and livestock products, which is ASA's most important objective in the Doha negotiations.

ASA congratulates U.S. Trade Ambassador Robert Zoellick, Agricultural Trade Negotiator Allen Johnson, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and their negotiating team for working out the details of this important agreement during talks in Geneva in August.

ASA supports the stated position of the U.S. negotiating team that

the extent to which trade-distorting domestic farm supports are reduced must be matched by meaningful gains in market access through tariff reduction and higher Tariff Rate Quotas on import-sensitive products. ASA believes that meeting this goal will be the key to achieving a successful outcome in the next phase of negotiations.

"This is as balanced a framework as could be expected, and we look forward to working closely with our negotiators as this process enters the next critical phase," said ASA President Neal Bredehoeft, a soybean grower from Alma, Mo. "ASA is particularly pleased that language in the previous draft framework that could have restricted U.S. food aid donations

as 'surplus disposal' has been deleted from this final text. That provision could have severely reduced non-emergency humanitarian food assistance programs that are vital in feeding millions of hungry people around the world.

"ASA has asked that negotiations address the need to require advanced developing countries, particularly world class exporters like Brazil, to comply with the same disciplines on domestic support and export competition that developed countries must observe," Bredehoeft said. "We will continue to press our negotiators to address this issue as the talks move forward."

ASA Re-Enforces Partnership With Japan

Through a partnership program that has been going strong for about eight years, the American Soybean Association (ASA) has helped maintain a vital export market for U.S. soybeans to Japan. In 2003, Japan imported \$957 million worth of U.S. soybeans and \$61 million of soybean meal.

ASA President Neal Bredehoeft participated in this year's Japan Partnership Program, an annual activity that is focused on furthering the knowledge and understanding of key executives in the Japanese soybean crushing and importing industry about the high quality of the U.S. soybean crop.

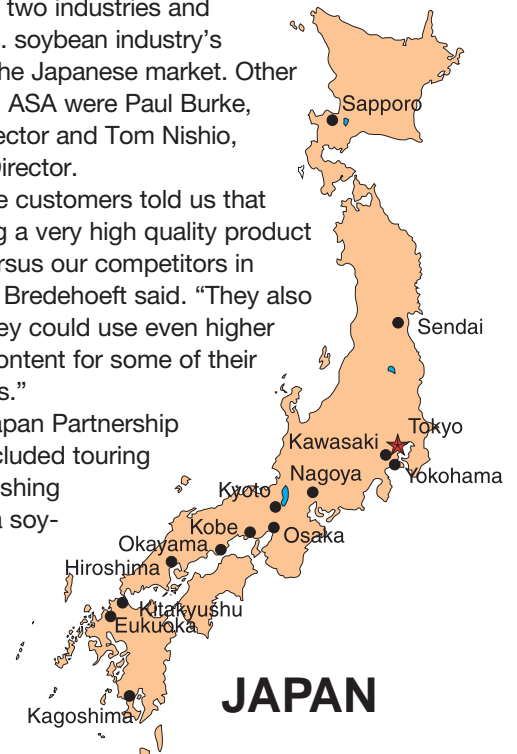
"The Japanese market is one of our oldest and most mature markets," Bredehoeft said. "Of the total amount of soybeans that they import, 70 percent of those soybeans come from the U.S., and this is due to the long-term relationship and partnership we have with Japanese customers."

Bredehoeft, ASA Executive Committee member Rick Ostlie and other U.S. soybean grower leaders participated in a roundtable meeting with key management professionals from the Japanese soybean crushing industry to discuss and exchange views on key

issues facing the two industries and reinforce the U.S. soybean industry's commitment to the Japanese market. Other participants from ASA were Paul Burke, Asia Division Director and Tom Nishio, Japan Country Director.

"The Japanese customers told us that they were getting a very high quality product from the U.S. versus our competitors in South America," Bredehoeft said. "They also indicated that they could use even higher oil and protein content for some of their specialty markets."

This year's Japan Partnership Program also included touring two soybean crushing operations and a soy-based food manufacturing facility.



ASA Comments On Soy's Place in Food Pyramid

The American Soybean Association (ASA) has asked the Food Guide Pyramid Reassessment Team to acknowledge the nutritional contributions of soyfoods in the American diet.

ASA President Neal Bredehoeft submitted comments on ASA's behalf to the Reassessment Team, which asked for comments on a new Food Guidance System to reflect the recommendations of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

"ASA encourages the Team to recognize the growing importance of soyfoods in the diets of many Americans. Research shows that more than 25 percent of U.S. consumers buy and use soy at least once a week," Bredehoeft wrote. "The current Pyramid includes tofu, soyburger and soy-based beverages in its recommendations...ASA recommends that the Team consider expanding this listing to include references to the many nutritional soyfoods that Americans increasingly select, including soy yogurt, soynuts and additional soy-based meat alternatives."



Supermarket sales of soymilk are growing at a rate of 25 percent a year. By 2010, soymilk is expected to represent as much as 10 percent of U.S. milk consumption.

"ASA strongly recommends the Team reflect the widespread consumption of soymilk by specifically referencing calcium-fortified soymilk as a recommendation in the Milk, Yogurt and Cheese Group, not as a footnote," Bredehoeft said.

ASA's comments also highlighted the industry's response to concerns about trans fats, noting, "Soybean farmers are committed to developing non-trans alternatives that will continue to provide the superior functional characteristics found in soybean oil, which have made it the oil of choice around the world."

In the United States, soybean oil represented 81 percent of edible oil consumption in 2002. Soybean oil is relatively low to moderate in saturated fat and is a good source of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats.

ASA Prepares Leaders for Today and the Future

For any business or organization, there is no role more important than leadership. The American Soybean Association (ASA) has a strong commitment to helping create a training and learning environment for soybean farmers who want to be involved in leadership in their industry at the local, state or national level.

ASA has a variety of leadership training programs designed to create a solid bank of growers who can speak to the issues that affect the soybean industry and agriculture. This pool of producers creates a strong voice for soybean growers.

The following four programs offered by ASA provide leadership training in different formats.

ASA/DuPont Young Leader Program

The Young Leader Program is recognized throughout agriculture for its longstanding tradition of identifying and cultivating the producer-leaders who are shaping the U.S. soybean industry. Since the program began in 1984, the goal has been the same - to seek out and develop new leadership for agriculture, whether the individual is young in age or simply new to leadership.

ASA Soybean Leadership College

In its fifth year, the ASA Soybean Leadership College offers winter and summer education sessions that provide information to help soybean growers develop

skills that allow them to become more involved in leadership roles. Sessions address such topics as media interviews, motivation, leading meetings, dealing with change and understanding the issues.

ASA/Syngenta Leadership At It's Best

For more than 12 years, the Leadership At It's Best program has provided soybean growers with advanced leadership training and the necessary communication skills to effectively address legislative issues. The program has developed and maintained a base of farmer leaders that effectively addresses national policy issues impacting soybean farming.

ASA/Dow AgroSciences Environmental Leadership Training Program

Farmer-leaders of ASA are often called upon to serve as spokespersons in addressing environmental and regulatory issues on behalf of soybean producers. The ASA/Dow AgroSciences Environmental Leadership Training Program is key to maintaining a team of well-informed soybean association leaders to speak on these important issues.

For more information about any of the American Soybean Association's leadership training programs, contact ASA at 800/688-7692, or visit www.SoyGrowers.com.