

# GATT Reports Worry Soy Farmers

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — U.S. soybean farmers are becoming increasingly alarmed that U.S. agriculture — and soybean farmers in particular — will be the losers in the GATT negotiating process.

"We are very concerned by reports out of Geneva that the U.S. is pursuing an agreement at any cost," said American Soybean Association President Gary Riedel. "The GATT process must result in an agreement that's good for U.S. soybean farmers. Any agreement must not include EC-supported 'rebalancing', and must achieve meaningful reductions in EC internal oilseed subsidies to be acceptable to soybean farmers."

Riedel says soybean farmers are especially concerned about the

European Community's continuing demands for "rebalancing," which would allow the EC to impose import barriers for soybeans, soybean meal, and corn gluten, while lowering barriers for other commodities.

"We heard rumors last weekend that the U.S. was softening its stance on rebalancing," Riedel said. "After repeated statements from the administration that rebalancing would be unacceptable, soybean farmers were very distressed to hear these reports. We can only hope that the rumors are not true."

He noted that the Congress expressed its strong opposition to rebalancing in the 1990 Farm Bill.

Riedel said the failure of the GATT process to effectively

resolve the U.S.-EC dispute over the EC's GATT-illegal oilseeds program "calls into question" the entire process. "After four years and a GATT dispute settlement panel ruling against the EC oilseeds program, the EC has yet to take significant action to reform their program. If we can't enforce the agreements already in place, what is the purpose of pursuing a new agreement?"

"U.S. soybean farmers have

been supportive of the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations and worked aggressively for fast track authority to enable the negotiations to move forward," Riedel said. "However, unless the U.S.

negotiators come home with an agreement that benefits U.S. soybean farmers, we will be forced not only to withdraw our support, but to work aggressively to defeat the agreement."

*Merry Christmas*

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