NFU Supports Clinton's Commitment To Broaden World Trade Negotiations

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND National Farmers Union (NFU) called the commitment of President Bill Clinton to reform the World Trade Organization (WTO) "an important development."

Addressing the WTO. Ministerial Conference here recently, the president pledged to make the world trade negotiating system more inclusive and to push for future negotiations to be broadened to include labor, the environment, and other issues impacting U.S. agricultural producers.

"The president's speech to the WTO is a positive change in direction for family farmers and ranchers, as a pledge was made to include all stakeholders in future trade negotiations," said Tom Buis, NFU vice president of government relations.

"Farmers Union is very pleased with President Clinton's commitment to seek future trade agreements that encourage other nations to raise their quality standards, rather than the current system which has forced the United States to lower its standards," Buis said. "NFU also is pleased that the president affirmed the right of nations to set domestic standards which protect health and safety, the environment and biodiversity, even when they are stronger than international standards."

Buis also noted that President Clinton announced his support of an expanded trade grievance negotiating process. Currently only the parties directly involved in a trade dispute can argue their cases. Clinton supports allowing third parties with vested interests to participate by filing Amicus briefs.

In addition, NFU praised U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman and U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky for aggressively seeking a solution to halt European Union subsidized barley from being exported to the United States. "Glickman and Barshefsky and their teams are working very hard to ensure that this does not happen again," said Buis.

Buis represented NFU at the WTO conference, which was held to outline a plan for negotiations on agriculture and the service industry beginning in 2000. Clinton and many of world leaders addressed the WTO on the occasion of the world body's 50th anniversary. (WTO was formerly called



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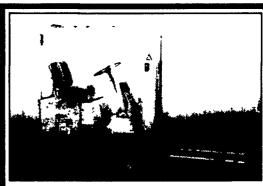
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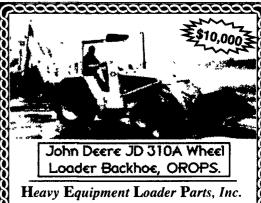
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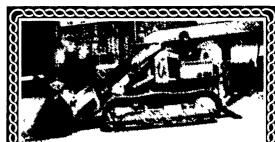


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