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NDA DIRECTOR IBACH PROMOTING NEBRASKA AG GOODS IN EMERGING SOUTHEAST ASIA MARKETS

LINCOLN – Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach is in Southeast Asia this week promoting Nebraska agricultural products in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Manila, Philippines. While in Kuala Lumpur, Ibach also will have the opportunity to meet with potential customers from Burma and Thailand.

Ibach is traveling as part of a delegation led by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary Michael Scuse. Mark McHargue, first vice president of the Nebraska Farm Bureau, and Stan Garbacz, NDA’s international trade representative, also are representing Nebraska on the trip. The delegation includes representatives from six state agriculture agencies (Nebraska, Idaho, Iowa, North Dakota, Texas and Virginia) and 21 agribusinesses and organizations.

According to Ibach, agricultural exports into the area have been on the rise recently with U.S. exports of food and agricultural products to the four countries doubling over the past five years, from \$2.7 billion in 2009 to \$5.4 billion in 2014.

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“I am pleased Under Secretary Scuse invited Nebraska to participate in this important trade mission. There is a tremendous opportunity for our agricultural exports to continue to grow in Southeast Asia, and I hope to be able to forge relationships and open the door to future trade deals for Nebraska while I am here,” said Ibach.

In the past five years, the market for Nebraska beef entering the Philippines has grown from \$905,000 to \$7.9 million. Beef also has experienced growth in Thailand from \$33,000 to \$973,000 in that same time frame. Dry edible beans have experienced growth in the Malaysia market, jumping from \$744,000 to \$2.2 million between 2009 and 2014.

“I am proud to join Director Ibach as we work to build relationships with our friends in Southeast Asia. Nebraska’s farmers and ranchers have a reputation around the world for high quality products, and I believe the outreach in Asia will help us develop more trade opportunities for Nebraska producers,” said McHargue.

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