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NEWS RELEASE For Immediate Release



October 6, 2014
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NDA DIRECTOR IBACH TO LEAD TRI-NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL ACCORD MEETING

LINCOLN – Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach will serve as the head of the U.S. delegation this week at a three-country meeting to discuss agricultural trade issues. The Tri-National Agricultural Accord between agriculture leaders from Canada, Mexico and the United States will be held October 7-9 in Chicago, Illinois.

“As the lead U.S. delegate, I look forward to facilitating open and honest dialogue among my colleagues and the delegates from Canada and Mexico,” Ibach said. “There are a variety of critical agricultural trade and development issues impacting all three nations.”

During the Accord country-to-country discussions will be held, as well as tri-lateral (all three countries) discussions. All three countries’ delegates can request discussion on issues of interest. As head of the U.S. delegation, Ibach will work with other U.S. agriculture department leaders to facilitate the discussions with their Canadian and Mexican counterparts on issues that they feel should be addressed in the coming year. He will be the key U.S. spokesperson during the negotiations, and as the chief point person for all communications between the three countries, he will be the U.S. signatory on any agreements made between the three delegations. The results of the discussions can include joint letters to government leaders on certain issues and a work plan for future dialogue.

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The Tri-National Agricultural Accord dates back to 1984 when efforts to expand the U.S./Canada Free Trade Agreement (FTA) began. In the early 1990s, as work to create a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) began, it was decided to invite Mexico to participate in the Accord. The first trilateral Accord meeting was held in 1992 and since that time the annual meeting has rotated among the three countries.

In the United States, the Accord is hosted through the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA). NDA is a member of NASDA, and Ibach is the organization's current vice president and also the chair of the body's International Trade and Marketing Committee.

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