



**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Joshua Baca

571.438.5816

[press@americansforfarmersandfamilies.com](mailto:press@americansforfarmersandfamilies.com)

1.17.2018

## **New Coalition Advocates For North American Free Trade Agreement Preservation & Modernization**

*Food & Agricultural Sectors Support 43 Million American Jobs & Depend On Trade With Canada & Mexico*

**(Washington, D.C.)** – A broad-based group of over 30 organizations representing growers, refiners, producers, transporters, retailers and consumers today announced the formation of Americans for Farmers & Families (AFF), a coalition that will work to ensure President Donald Trump and Congressional leaders understand the importance of preserving and modernizing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to America's agricultural and retail economies.

Since taking effect in 1994, the positive impacts of NAFTA extend beyond America's farming community, and have helped the food and agricultural industries to grow to support more than 43 million jobs. But it is rural economies and communities that are among the biggest winners under NAFTA, the very same communities that powered President Trump to victory in 2016.

Under NAFTA, food and agriculture exports have more than quadrupled and account for 25 percent of American exports. One in every 10 acres of American crops is for export to NAFTA partners. NAFTA has fueled agriculture-related industries' growth, which in turn has been a driver in building American jobs. Today, American food and agriculture supports more than 20 percent of the U.S. workforce and provides more manufacturing jobs than any other sector. And NAFTA has helped keep grocery prices down for all Americans.

"Farm Belt voters supported President Trump by a three-to-one margin in the last election and they are counting on President Trump to improve NAFTA in the modernization negotiations," said John Bode, president and CEO of the Corn Refiners Association and a member of AFF's leadership committee. "It's not an exaggeration to say many farmers are still farming today because of NAFTA. We know that President Trump has a lot of experience negotiating good deals. We support him in updating and improving NAFTA."

NAFTA has opened markets to America's farmers, grown domestic jobs and supported \$127 billion in annual economic activity. Fruit and vegetable exports alone from the United States to Canada and Mexico have more than tripled under NAFTA. As President Trump's negotiators are debating major changes to the agreement, we will ensure they keep a clear eye on the positive impact NAFTA has had on the American economy, job growth and wages.

"NAFTA has opened markets for America's farmers and ranchers, and U.S. agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico have quadrupled under the agreement," said Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation and a member of AFF's leadership committee. "The current negotiations should build on that success. Farm Bureau is pleased to work with AFF as well as Farmers for Free Trade and other collaborative efforts to engage farmers and leaders at the local, state and national levels and deliver that message to Congress and the President."

As part of this effort, AFF will be launching a robust educational campaign to highlight the positive impact NAFTA achieves for hard-working Americans and lay the groundwork for an updated trade agreement that preserves America's strong economic standing for decades to come.



“We look forward to being active participants in this discussion as we ensure the growers, producers, processors, transporters, retailers and consumers we represent have their voices heard,” added Chris Novak, CEO of the National Corn Growers Association and another member of AFF’s leadership committee. “This issue is simply too important for us to sit on the sidelines.”

“Canada and Mexico represent the second and third largest markets for U.S. agriculture,” said AFF leadership committee member Neil Dierks, CEO of the National Pork Producers Council. “A modernized NAFTA is critical to the prosperity of rural America.”

For more information on AFF, including an initial membership list, please visit <https://americansforfarmersandfamilies.com/>

###