



**AMERICANS FOR
FARMERS & FAMILIES**
STRONG FARMING MEANS JOBS

For Immediate Release:

Contact: press@americansforfarmersandfamilies.com

2.7.2018

Americans for Farmers & Families Talk NAFTA Impact With Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley

(Des Moines, Iowa) - The Iowa chapter of Americans for Farmers & Families (AFF), a coalition working 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, today joined Senator Chuck Grassley to discuss the effects of NAFTA on the Iowan economy.

"I want you to know that I am going to continue to advocate and educate people out in Washington on the important role trade plays in the agricultural sector," said Sen. Grassley. "I am one of two family farmers in the senate so you know I'm going to continue to fight for policies for the American farmer."

In 2016, Iowans exported a total of \$5 billion in food and agricultural products, \$2.5 billion (51 percent) of which went to NAFTA partners. By bolstering the economy and both directly and indirectly supporting \$40 billion in wages throughout the state, NAFTA has become a trade agreement farmers depend on. Rural communities, like those in Iowa, are amongst the biggest winners under NAFTA, the very same areas that powered then-candidate Trump's victory in 2016.

"The livestock industry depends on [NAFTA] and if this trade agreement goes away, a lot of profits are going to go away. It is important we maintain it," said Ed Wiederstein, former president of the Iowa Farm Bureau and Audubon-area farmer.

"A temporary trade disruption hurts my paycheck for an entire year or even an entire two years," added Ron Heck, former chairman of the American Soybean Association and corn farmer in Perry, Iowa. "I want to make sure the [non-agricultural community] understands a temporary disruption is much more severe than it first appears."

Since its implementation more than 20 years ago, the benefits of NAFTA have spread beyond America's agricultural community, helping grow over 43 million jobs, including more than 750,000 in Iowa. Ten percent of all land farmed in the United States produces exports to Canada and Mexico. These exports have more than quadrupled under the trade agreement and now represent 25 percent of American exports. NAFTA has opened markets to America's farmers, grown domestic jobs and supported \$127 billion in annual economic activity. Under NAFTA, the U.S. food and agriculture industries support more than 43 million jobs throughout the nation.

"The President has made great progress for the economy and it has been enhanced by his signing of the tax reform bill...if we withdraw from NAFTA it will undo a great deal of benefits of the tax bill from the economy," Sen. Grassley explained. "President Trump needs to be cognizant of what the farmers have done to elect him, especially in Iowa."

For more information, visit <https://americansforfarmersandfamilies.com/>.

###