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For Immediate Release:

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Indiana Agriculture Leaders Stress Importance of NAFTA to State's Farm and Food Economy

(INDIANAPOLIS, IN) – Some of Indiana's leading agricultural voices today joined forces to make the case for the need to preserve and modernize the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). To help push for NAFTA preservation and modernization, three Indiana-based groups have joined the newly-formed pro-NAFTA organization **Americans for Farmers & Families** (AFF). AFF is a national coalition of over 80 growers, producers, suppliers, transporters, retailers and consumers that is dedicated to educating lawmakers and the public about the importance of the Mexican and Canadian markets to America's agricultural and retail economies.

With \$1.4 billion in total food and agricultural based product exports, Indiana's economy relies on NAFTA to supply \$37 billion in wages. During a tele-press conference held earlier today, Indiana members of AFF spoke on that importance of NAFTA to Indiana's farmers and ag community.

"There are a lot of positives of NAFTA as it relates to agriculture in Indiana; and all throughout the value chain and economy we would feel the impact should the U.S. withdraw from NAFTA," said Sarah Delbecq, president of the Indiana Corn Growers Association. "NAFTA is critical to Hoosier corn farmers. Last year, we exported over 14% of the US corn crop, and Mexico was the number one buyer of U.S. corn; Canada was the 5th largest purchaser. Additionally, Canada was the largest importer of the over 1.3 billion gallons of ethanol exported last year, and Mexico the number one importer of DDGS - a livestock feed made as a co-product of ethanol production."

Corn is not the only important NAFTA export crop in the state. Soybeans are also tremendously impacted by NAFTA with over half of production exported, and Mexico as the second largest market for those exports.

“The Administration has promised to ‘do no harm’ as they renegotiate the agreement,” said Joe Steinkamp, Indiana Soybean Alliance member and executive board member of the American Soybean Association, “but the truth is, even rhetoric indicating the willingness of the U.S. to pull out of NAFTA does harm; actually withdrawing would economically devastate the farm.”

Indiana’s livestock industry would also be negatively impacted if the U.S. withdrew from NAFTA. “10% of Indiana grown beef is exported,” said Joe Moore, Executive Vice President of the Indiana Beef Cattle Association, “to make up for that lost market each Hoosier would have to eat an extra 40 pounds of protein per year.”

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 870,000 in Indiana.

Americans for Farmers & Families is a coalition of growers, producers, suppliers, transporters, retailers and consumers dedicated to preserving NAFTA and working with President Trump to negotiate a modernized agreement fit for the 21st Century. To learn more, visit: www.AmericansForFarmersAndFamilies.com.

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