



National Agriculture Week: March 13-19, 2011
National Agriculture Day: March 15, 2011

Thanks To Our Ag Industry

Agricultural Exports and the Economic Recovery

By Agriculture Secretary, Tom Vilsack

As the United States and global economies work to recover from the worst recession in decades, American agriculture is helping to lead our nation's recovery by shattering trade records, creating jobs here at home and ensuring affordable food for U.S. families. Thanks to one of the most productive eras in history for U.S.

agriculture and a reputation for high quality products, farmers and ranchers are breaking records for sales of U.S. farm goods abroad and looking forward to some of the best net incomes in decades. U.S. Agriculture even has a trade surplus, expected to be worth \$47.5 billion this year. Agricultural exports mean jobs for Americans here at home - every \$1 billion in farm exports

supports roughly 8,000 jobs in the United States in agriculture and related industries. This year, exports will support over a million such jobs. And for the rest of the nation, the quality, affordable domestic food supply means that the average American spends less than ten percent of their paycheck on groceries - less than in many other developed nations. In the years ahead, USDA will

work harder than ever to give agricultural businesses even greater opportunities to grow. We want farmers to know that opportunities exist beyond our shores. Today, only 1 percent of U.S. companies export, and yet 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside the borders of the United States. We can do better to reach those consumers. Smart trade deals that increase

exports, support job creation, and bolster the American economy can help build for our future. Right now, the Obama administration is working to move forward on proposed U.S. trade agreements with South Korea, then Panama and Colombia - nations with 100 million consumers. Successful approval would bring billions of dollars to U.S. agriculture and immediate benefits by eliminating tariffs on a range of agricultural products.

the export market. Whether it means directly connecting U.S. companies and trade groups with foreign customers or advocating more forcefully for their interests with other governments, we are working to expand economic opportunities for Americans. For decades, U.S. agriculture has helped to feed a hungry world, added jobs to our economy and reduced our trade deficit. As we work to strengthen the economy to win the future, don't be surprised that American farmers and ranchers are once again helping to lead the way.

Since 2009, when I became Agriculture Secretary, USDA officials have negotiated hard to open markets for U.S. farm goods. Thanks to the President's National Export Initiative, which challenged U.S. businesses to double all exports by the end of 2014, USDA is now reaching out to producers and agribusinesses, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises, with information about how to tackle

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Ag Day will be celebrated on March 15

National Ag Day FAQ's
What Is Ag Day?

It's a day to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. Every year, producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others across America join together to recognize the contributions of agriculture.

When Is Ag Day?

Ag Day is celebrated on March 15, 2011. National Ag Day falls during National Ag Week, March 13-19, 2011.

Who Hosts Ag Day?

The Agriculture Council of America hosts the campaign on a national level. However, the awareness efforts in communities across America are as influential - if not more - than the broad-scale effort. Again this year, the Ag Day Planning Guide has been created

to help communities and organizations more effectively host Ag Day events.

What Is Ag Day All About?

Ag Day is about recognizing - and celebrating - the contribution of agriculture in our everyday lives. The National Ag Day program encourages every American to:

Understand how food and fiber products are produced.

Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.

Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products.

Why Celebrate Agriculture?

Agriculture provides almost everything we eat, use and wear on a daily basis. But too few people truly understand this contribution. This is particularly the case in our schools, where students may only be exposed to agriculture if they enroll in related vocational training. By building awareness, the Agriculture Council of America is encouraging young people to consider career opportunities in agriculture.

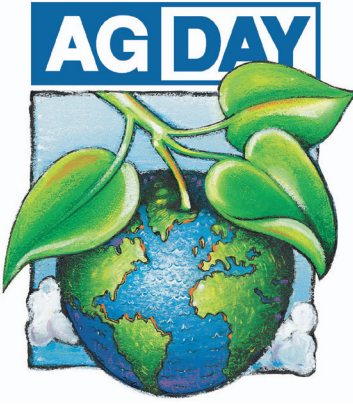
Each American farmer feeds more than 144 people... a dramatic increase from 25 people in the

1960s. Quite simply, American agriculture is doing more - and doing it better. As the world population soars, there is an even greater demand for the food and fiber produced in the United States.

What Can I Do to Help?


Put simply, get involved! Your participation in Ag Day is critical in helping us spread this positive message about agriculture. If you are interested in planning an event, download your Planning Guide today. Of course, there are other ways you can lend your support, including sending a letter to your local newspaper, calling your Congressional representatives or simply sharing information about agriculture with youngsters.

Where Can I Find More Information? Contact the Agriculture Council of America at (913) 491-1895. Or use our online contact form.




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