



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

# Finance

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## Grassley Comments on Progress by WTO Agriculture Committee

WASHINGTON — Sen. Chuck Grassley, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, issued the following comment regarding approval of a work plan today by the World Trade Organization Agriculture Committee in Geneva.

"Today, the WTO approved a reform-oriented work plan aimed at ending the high tariffs, trade-distorting support, and excessive export subsidies that many countries use to stifle competition in world agricultural markets. I'm very pleased with this achievement in Geneva because it means that the effort to liberalize world agricultural trade will move forward. It's a significant development. Some countries questioned whether we needed to move forward with ag trade liberalization at all. In the end, 140 member countries supported the initiative. As a result, the agenda for the Geneva-based talks will include very important items for farmers and agricultural producers.

"Today's development also shows that American leadership in world trade matters whether it's in these talks on agriculture and services or the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Sometime this year Congress will decide whether or not to renew the President's trade negotiating authority. The decision will be to move forward and open new markets for America's farmers, entrepreneurs and service providers or to take a back seat to our competitors. I'll do all I can to see that we continue to move forward."

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