



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

# Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

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## Grassley Meets with Mexican Senators, Urges Removal of Ag Trade Barriers

WASHINGTON – Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, with jurisdiction over trade issues, met this morning in his office with eight members of the Mexican Senate to discuss Mexican barriers, and threatened new barriers, to imports of U.S. agricultural products. Grassley emphasized that Mexico must abide by its obligations under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

“I felt I had to sit down with these officials and let them know, clearly, that Mexico’s actions against U.S. agricultural products are unacceptable,” Grassley. “Mexico’s trade barriers are impacting farmers throughout the country, including those in Iowa. In fact, not a day goes by without Iowa’s producers and their organizations letting me know of the harm that Mexico’s policies are causing them. This situation can’t continue.”

Mexico has imposed, or threatened to impose, barriers to imports of U.S. pork, corn, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), beef, rice, apples, and dry beans. Iowa is a major producer of pork, corn, HFCS, and beef.

U.S. producer organizations were among the strongest proponents of the NAFTA. “Unless Mexico begins complying with its NAFTA obligations, and soon, I’m concerned that the support of U.S. agriculture for trade liberalization will decline,” said Grassley. “That would benefit neither the United States nor Mexico.

“The Mexican senators stated that they want their visit to Washington this week to lead to a constructive dialogue in resolving trade disputes between our countries. I hope that it does. But with Mexico imposing barriers to imports of pork, corn, beef, HFCS, rice, apples, and dry beans, the ball is clearly in Mexico’s court. I suggest that Mexico remove these barriers, and promptly. Mexico is testing the patience of Congress.

“As chairman of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over international trade matters in the U.S. Senate, I’ll continue to closely monitor this situation and make sure the interests of Iowa’s family farmers are represented.”

On May 8, Grassley sent a strongly worded letter to Mexican officials, urging them to stop

taking actions against U.S. agricultural products that undermine the spirit, if not the law, of NAFTA.