U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

http://finance.senate.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Conclusion of Central American Free Trade Agreement negotiations
Da: Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2003

Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Committee on Finance, today made the following comment on the conclusion of negotiations on the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

"I'm pleased that the CAFTA negotiations were concluded successfully. This historic agreement will provide unprecedented access for Iowa's agricultural products and factory goods in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Under this agreement, exports of Iowa pork, corn, and beef will have the opportunity to grow significantly in the region, and Iowa soybeans will continue to enjoy open access there.

"While Costa Rica is not part of the initial agreement, I hope that we'll be able to resolve outstanding issues with that nation soon. I'm also pleased that we're continuing our efforts with the CAFTA countries to remove unjustified sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to our agricultural exports. I'll work to ensure that any unjustified non-tariff barriers to U.S. agricultural products are eliminated before the agreement is considered by the Congress. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move the CAFTA through the U.S. Senate."