



**WETEC**

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## ***Keep the Food in Food Aid***

- ◆ **The U.S. wheat industry opposes any attempt in the World Trade Organization (WTO) or in any other venues to require that food aid be given as “cash only” instead of allowing donor nations to provide food directly as emergency and development assistance.**
- ◆ **The U.S. wheat industry supports funding food aid programs at levels no less than the amounts needed to provide food donation levels of at least 6 million metric tons annually, of which 3 million metric tons should be wheat.**
- ◇ **Wheat producer organizations continue to support the original intent that wheat held in the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust be used for its purpose to provide direct food aid and should not be sold back into the U.S. domestic market. Wheat producers urge the Administration to promptly replenish commodities released from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust, in a timely manner.**
- ◆ **U.S. wheat producers believe that current programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are effective and should remain under USDA management.**
- ◆ **Wheat producers believe that, except in times of emergency, U.S. food aid programs should be comprised of U.S. produced food.**
- ◆ **Wheat producer organizations oppose withholding food aid for political purposes.**

### **Background**

Current international food aid oversight and requirements are sufficient and continue to work well. The WTO should only require that food aid programs not distort commercial markets and be consistent with guidelines of legitimate food aid organizations. Food aid programs should be monitored by the food aid convention of the United Nations.

The international humanitarian community needs a reliable, steady level of food aid. In times of crisis, and when food prices rise, a commitment of minimum tonnages would help protect the most vulnerable recipients from harm. It would also allow agricultural producers and processors to plan for the provision of those foodstuffs. A commitment to minimum tonnages would also combat European arguments that the U.S. uses food as an export subsidy. It would assure food aid availability at adequate levels.

U.S. Government food aid is distributed by private voluntary organizations around the world. A broad spectrum of America, including farming, processing, transportation and distribution industries participate in the giving and handling of food aid. Food that America gives to the hungry is home grown and nutritious. To disconnect growing and handling of food from humanitarian food programs removes the involvement and interest of thousands of Americans and puts support for those programs at risk. By using American grown food in food aid, American hands and American infrastructure are involved throughout the entire operation, and we can assure and stand by the quality of the food that is delivered.

While the need for food aid has increased, U.S. donations continue to decrease. Food aid programs must be funded and allowed to function in ways that meet humanitarian and development needs.