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NCGA Commends Progress Made on Colombia FTA

(WASHINGTON) April 6, 2011 -- The National Corn Growers Association today commended the progress made on resolving outstanding issues with the Colombia Free Trade Agreement that will now allow Congress to move forward with consideration. The Colombia FTA would provide immediate access for U.S. corn growers to Colombia's roughly 2.1 million metric ton market for corn at zero percent duty.

"Colombia has traditionally been one of the Top 10 export markets for U.S. corn," NCGA President Bart Schott said. "This is an important market for U.S. farmers and we do not want to watch this market slip away to our largest competitors. America's corn producers stand ready to produce enough corn to meet the increasing global demands for food, feed, fuel and fiber."

During marketing year 2007-08, the United States exported 114 million bushels of corn to Colombia, with an estimated value of nearly \$627 million. U.S. corn exports declined dramatically during the 2009-10 marketing year, with only 36 million bushels exported, valued at \$152 million. The decline in exports reflected a loss of \$475 million to the U.S. economy.

"We support the pending Free Trade Agreement with Colombia, as well as those with Korea and Panama," Schott said. "NCGA remains committed to the development and maintenance of fair and open global trade policies and we look forward to working with Congress to ensure passage of these important FTAs."

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Founded in 1957, the National Corn Growers Association represents 35,000 dues-paying corn farmers nationwide and the interests of more than 300,000 growers who contribute through corn checkoff programs in their states. NCGA and its 48 affiliated state associations and checkoff organizations work together to create and increase opportunities for their members and their industry.