



porkcares.org

For Immediate Release

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Massachusetts Legislature Preserves Farmers' Right

WASHINGTON, D.C., Aug. 6, 2014 – The National Pork Producers Council and America's hog farmers today thanked the Massachusetts Legislature for refusing to pass a misguided bill to restrict the rights of local farmers. Legislation backed by animal-rights groups would have prohibited hog farmers in the state from housing sows in gestation stalls.

Hog farmers – the vast majority family-owned – use gestation stalls for pregnant sows because they allow for individualized care and eliminate aggression from other sows. The Massachusetts bill would have banned the practice, as well as limited other practices farmers use to care for their animals.

The legislation was approved by the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, but then was held in the Senate Ways and Means Committee and was not brought up in the full House before the legislature ended its formal session.

For years, well-funded animal-rights groups have poured significant amounts of money into northeast states in an unsuccessful attempt to strong-arm lawmakers into passing laws that restrict the rights of farmers. The states, which have little pork production, are being used by animal-rights groups as pawns to advance a national agenda aimed at controlling how farmers raise and care for their animals.

“Massachusetts family farmers are relieved the legislature had the good sense not to waste time debating a law prohibiting farmers' choices in taking care of their animals,” said Lisa Colby, a hog farmer from Newburyport, Mass.

Under intense and continuous pressure from animal-rights groups, Massachusetts hog farmers stood strong and refused to

be bullied.

“It is unfortunate these organizations insist on wasting lawmakers’ time – and their donors’ contributions – on so many failed attempts to deny farmers’ right to farm,” Colby said. “No two farms are alike, and we thank the legislature for realizing that farmers should have the freedom to operate in the best way for their farm and for their animals.”

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NPPC is the global voice for the U.S. pork industry, protecting the livelihoods of America’s 67,000 pork producers, who abide by ethical principles in caring for their animals, in protecting the environment and public health and in providing safe, wholesome, nutritious pork products to consumers worldwide. For more information, visit www.nppc.org.



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U.S. Pork Weighs In On Important Trade Matters

WASHINGTON, D.C., Aug. 4, 2014 – The National Pork Producers Council weighed in on two important trade matters, insisting that U.S. trade negotiators get from Japan a deal on pork similar to the one the United States got from South Korea and urging lawmakers to exclude South Africa from a U.S. preferential trade measure.

In written [testimony](#) submitted to the Senate Finance Committee International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness Subcommittee, NPPC said the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which was implemented in March 2012, “provides the kind of

access opportunities for U.S. pork that NPPC would like to see in all U.S. FTAs.” It noted that the deal on pork in the agreement was accomplished despite opposition from South Korean farmers and compared it with the offer from Japan on pork in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations. Japan’s trade negotiators so far have refused to eliminate tariffs on pork – and number of other “sensitive” agricultural products – because of opposition from Japanese farmers.

“Opening the market to U.S. pork is no more politically sensitive in Japan than it is in South Korea,” said NPPC, which also pointed out that elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers on all products is the hallmark of U.S. FTAs. “There is absolutely no reason Japan should be treated differently from other U.S. FTA partners.”

The organization also sent [testimony](#) to the House Ways and Means trade subcommittee on renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which gives African countries preferential treatment for their products in the U.S. market. AGOA expires next year. (The AGOA [testimony](#) also was submitted to the Senate Finance Committee.)

NPPC supports renewal of AGOA for countries that abide by their international trade obligations and that allow access to their markets for U.S. products. It said South Africa, which doesn’t meet those criteria, should be excluded, and the United States should not start free trade negotiations with that country.

Despite years of technical discussions between the U.S. and South African governments, NPPC pointed out in its testimony, the African nation has made no effort to eliminate barriers to U.S. trade in pork. The restrictions, said NPPC, are not based on legitimate food-safety concerns and likely violate World Trade Organization rules.

“Given South Africa’s *de facto* ban on U.S. pork and its lack of progress in opening its market,” said NPPC, “South Africa should be excluded from participation in the AGOA program.”

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