

**California Wheat Commission**

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www.californiawheat.org

**California Association  
of Wheat Growers**

1521 I Street  
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Phone (916) 492-7066, Fax (916) 446-1063

July 13, 2005

The Honorable Wally Herger  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
By Fax

Dear Representative Herger:

On behalf of California wheat growers, we are writing to thank you for your help in seeking an end to Mexico's ban on importing California wheat. Your leadership on the recent California Congressional Delegation letter to Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns was much appreciated.

Since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement, Mexico has become the second largest market for U.S. wheat. As you know, California growers have not been able to access this growing market opportunity. We understand from USDA that resolution of this issue may be imminent. The recent delegation letter, signed by 23 members, will certainly move the issue in the right direction.

We have been working to get this ban lifted for almost a decade, and you have been with us all the way. Your staff, first Paul Poteet and Derek Harley, and more recently Alex Oehler and Dan MacLean, have been very responsive and helpful. We have enjoyed working closely with them on this and other issues of importance to the wheat industry.

Again, thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Bonnie Fernandez in cursive.

Bonnie Fernandez  
Executive Director  
California Wheat Commission

Handwritten signature of Janice Cooper in cursive.

Janice Cooper  
Executive Director  
California Association of  
Wheat Growers

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Press Release  
July 13, 2005

Contact: Bonnie Fernandez  
Executive Director  
California Wheat Commission  
Phone 530.661.1292

***Mexico lifts nine year ban on California wheat***

Woodland, Ca. – The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mexican Department of Agriculture have signed an agreement that will lift a nine year ban on the imports of wheat from California, Arizona and New Mexico.

The California Wheat Commission and the California Association of Wheat Growers have been working to resolve this issue since the restriction was put place in 1996. At that time Karnal bunt fungus was found in limited areas in the Desert Southwest.

Commission Chairman, Mike Frey stated, "California wheat producers have varieties that will fit nicely into the product mix in Mexico. We look forward to working with the wheat buyers in Mexico and the grain trade in California to encourage business between these two markets. We have anxiously awaited this opportunity."

During the past nine year period there have been many parties involved in helping to get the Mexican quarantine lifted. While the list is extensive, California Association of Wheat Growers President, Larry Hunn noted, "We are particularly appreciative of the support we have received from the California Congressional Delegation (with the leadership of Representatives Wally Herger, Bob Filner and Bill Thomas), U.S. Wheat Associates, the National Association of Wheat Growers, Wheat Export Trade Education Committee, California Department of Food and Agriculture, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture. It is not always easy to explain to producers how much effort and coordination goes into resolving a quarantine issue. Today we can show our members that these efforts can be successful."

In recent years, Mexico has become the second largest market for U.S. wheat exports. California wheat growers look forward to helping to meet the demand from Mexican consumers for this high quality product.

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