



PO Box 1165  
Great Falls, MT 59403  
ph 406.761.4596  
fx 406.761.4606  
email: [mgga@mgga.org](mailto:mgga@mgga.org)

*For immediate release*  
October 20, 2017

*For additional information, contact:*  
Lola Raska: 406-761-4596; [lraska@mgga.org](mailto:lraska@mgga.org)

### **Farm Bill and Trade Hot Topics at 2017 Fall Wheat Conference**

*Great Falls* - The National Association of Wheat Growers and U.S. Wheat Associates held their annual fall conference this week in Charleston, SC. NAWG's Committees covered a range of topics including the 2018 Farm Bill, NAFTA renegotiation, wheat research funding, trade, and conservation.

"With more than one hundred growers from across the country huddled together to discuss key policy issues affecting wheat farmers, this year's Fall Conference was a success," stated NAWG CEO Chandler Goule. "The Senate and House Agriculture Committees are deep into discussions around the 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization, and so it was critical to have this conference to ensure growers are aligned on messaging around NAWG's top priorities and to maintain momentum to improve Farm Bill programs."

Attending from the Montana Grain Growers Association were President Tom Butcher, Vice President Michelle Jones, Treasurer Lyle Benjamin, Secretary Vince Mattson, and Executive Vice President Lola Raska. "With all the uncertainty in crop production, it's important for us to be at the table to ensure that any programs included in the next farm bill will work for Montana grain producers," said Butcher.

With trade being a foremost priority for the Administration, NAWG and USW's Joint International Trade Policy Committee had a packed agenda which tackled NAFTA, KORUS, and Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) program. The NAWG board adopted a resolution that came out of the Committee "to encourage the current administration to expedite the creation of bilateral trade agreements as stated or promised to increase agricultural trade."

"Having a strong trade agenda in place, means strengthening relationships with our current customers and opening up new markets," stated Goule. "The Administration promised us a series of bilateral deals in lieu of TPP and the creation of new markets for wheat, but so far we haven't seen that. Instead, it's actions are potentially harming relationships with our current partners and preventing new agreements from forming."

"We are working very closely with NAWG to make sure all the people that have influence over trade policy and export market development programs understand how important these issues are to wheat farmers," said USW President Vince Peterson. "This joint meeting helps move us forward more effectively."

The next NAWG/USW Conference is scheduled for February 6-11, 2018 in Washington, D.C., when growers from across the country will hit the Hill. For more information visit NAWG's site: <http://www.wheatworld.org/newsroom/meetings-events/>.

#

**NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE**