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For immediate release
August 25, 2019

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MGGA Welcomes Agreement on Ag with Japan

Great Falls – The Montana Grain Growers Association (MGGA) cheered the announcement by President Trump that a preliminary agreement has been reached to lower Japanese tariffs and increase market share for U.S. agricultural commodities. In making the announcement on Sunday at the Group of Seven summit in France, the President also said Japan would soon be purchasing large quantities of U.S. wheat and corn.

MGGA President Lyle Benjamin said, "We welcome the agreement in principle that will provide export market certainty in the crucial Japanese market for premium quality US wheat. This is a key development for Montana farmers who sell a majority of their wheat into the Asian markets."

Japan has historically represented the largest export market for Montana wheat, but we have been at a competitive disadvantage to other wheat producing countries since the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) went into effect earlier this year without the United States. Lacking a trade agreement Montana farmers expect their market share of wheat sales to Japan to fall significantly with annual losses estimated at \$150 million.

US Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Purdue said, "Japan is a significant market for United States agriculture exports, making this a good day for American agriculture. By removing existing barriers for our products, we will be able to sell more to the Japanese markets. At the same time we will be able to close gaps to better allow us to compete on a level playing field with our competitors."

Benjamin added, "We look forward to hearing more details and appreciate the diligent efforts of the US Trade Representative and others in the Trump administration to reach an agreement with our valued and long standing Japanese trade partners."

The Montana Grain Growers Association is the primary trade organization representing Montana wheat and barley producers who, by combining their strengths, voices, and ideas, are working to insure a better future for themselves, their industry and the consumer.

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