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For Immediate Release

Walden Applauds Shipment of PNW Wheat to China on Eve of Trade Vote

WASHINGTON, DC—Congressman Greg Walden today released a statement, which was read to a breakfast meeting in Portland hosted by Chinese Consul General Wang Yunxiang, regarding tomorrow's loading of the first shipment of Pacific Northwest wheat to China in 26 years. Walden is in Washington, D.C. this week working to pass Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) for China to allow many future shipments of wheat and other Oregon products to that country.

"I would like to thank Consul Wang Yunxiang for coming to Portland this morning to help mark this historic shipment of 50,000 metric tons of American wheat, 30,000 of it from the Pacific Northwest, to China. I hope it is the first of many such shipments," Walden's statement read.

This shipment is a direct result of the China-U.S. Agricultural Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in April, 1999. This agreement played a major part in the bilateral negotiations between the U.S. and China that paves the way for China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). To trade with China under the beneficial tariff structure of the WTO accession agreement, the U.S. must grant China PNTR.

More of Walden's statement: "I am optimistic that we will pass PNTR tomorrow and take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity to open Chinese markets to American goods. It is absolutely critical that we do so. On a recent trip to China with Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, I saw Oregon hazelnuts and Pacific Northwest apples. Those products and this shipment are just the tip of the iceberg if we pass PNTR. I am doing my best to ensure that this happens so that we can see many more ships leave the Port of Portland and other Pacific Northwest ports for China. We owe that to our farmers and the other Oregonians whose products, either directly or indirectly, could be sold in more open Chinese markets."

Congressman Walden represents the Second Congressional District of Oregon, which includes 20 counties in southern, central and eastern Oregon. He is a member of the Agriculture, Resources and Government Reform Committees in the House.

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