

U.S. and Japanese leaders celebrate trade relationships

Agri-Pulse Staff

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Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack helped commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1959 “hog lift” and participated in a number of efforts to build future trade relationships with Japanese leaders last week. During the 4-day trip, Vilsack gave a keynote address on April 7 at a Global Food Security Symposium sponsored by the U.S. Grains Council, met with the Japanese Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Hirotaka Akamatsu, held a Town Hall meeting with university students at the American Embassy in Tokyo and gave a speech at the Foreign Correspondents Club in Tokyo. Agri-Pulse Senior Editor Stewart Doan covered Secretary Vilsack’s trip and took these photos, along with some photos provided by the U.S. Grains Council.



From left to right: Secretary Vilsack and Minister Akamatsu share a greeting during the Global Food Security Symposium.

USGC President and CEO Tom Dorr welcomed participants to the first-ever Global Food Security Symposium, a forum for government,



academic and civil society leaders from both sides of the Pacific to discuss how to leverage past successes in international agricultural cooperative programs, plus today’s emerging technologies, to ensure food security in the face of a rapidly growing global population and climate change. US Grains Council Chair Rick Fruth, an Ohio grain producer who moderated a panel discussion focused on the topic, “Feeding a Growing World,” said crop producers are hungry for the technology that will allow them to help feed the world’s growing population. U.S. Ambassador John Roos, Yamanashi Governor Yokouchi & Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack posed for reporters after planting an oak tree - Iowa's official state tree - on the grounds of the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art in Kofu, Japan, to recognize the longstanding friendship between the two states and countries.



Over 250 meat marketers representing an estimated 80-90% of Japanese meat trade attended a USMEF American Pork Trade Seminar in Tokyo supported in part by Iowa pork and corn producers as well as the U.S. embassy. Attendees heard a presentation by Iowa State University animal scientist John Mabry on the advantages of U.S. pork, watched a pork cutting demonstration and received an update on American pork market trends and USMEF promotional



activity. USMEF introduced seasoned pork products as well as numerous branded pork products at an American Pork Trade Seminar. Japan is the top value export market for U.S. pork producers. On left: Richard Degner, CEO of the Iowa Pork Producers Assoc. and Tim Burrack, USGC board member and Iowa farmer on the train to celebrate the Hog Lift in Yamanashi, and Stewart Doan interviews Iowa Soybean Assoc. CEO Kirk Leeds. Iowa Ag Secretary Bill Northey (below) traveled to Japan to be part of the group. In what may have been a precursor of things to come for the GOP Ag Secretary, USDA issued a news release listing him as “Iowa Governor.”



Fumiho Marumo was just a young researcher when the first Iowa hogs arrived as part of the “hog lift” to help repopulate Japan’s herds after two typhoons wiped out most of their breeding herds,



but he remembers fondly the efforts of U.S. farmers in this visit with U.S. Grains Council CEO Tom Dorr. A group of Iowa farmers established the groundwork that has led to over \$280 billion of food and agricultural product exports to the island nation since that time. For more background, see: <http://www.agripulse.com/uploaded/20100408S2.pdf>

Below: One of the first of 36 sows to arrive as part of the historic “Hog Lift.”



Geoffrey Wiggin, Minister Conselor for Agricultural Affairs, U. S. Embassy in Tokyo, relaxes on the train from from Tokyo to Kofu. Below, Owen Newlin, a retired Pioneer Hybrid executive, joined in the celebration. Newlin, a former Chairman who received the first ever lifetime achievement award from the Grains Council, played an instrumental role in expanding U.S. grain exports.





Agricultural leaders from around the U.S. and Japan participated in the Global Food Security Symposium, including A.G. Kawamura, secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, shown here talking to reporters. Although meat and grain trade were high on the agenda, participants also discussed a wide variety of other crops, such as fruits and vegetables.



In photos below: Dr. Masayoshi Honhima, professor of agricultural and resource economics at the University of Tokyo participated in a panel discussing "Development Collaboration for Food Security."

Masaru Iwanaga, director-general of Japan's National Institute of Crop Research, offered his country's perspective on what's needed to feed a growing global population.



Agri-Pulse Senior Editor interviews U.S. Grains Council CEO Tom Dorr on the train to celebrate the historic "hog lift."

