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NOPA STRONGLY SUPPORTS U.S.-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 7, 2008—The National Oilseed Processors Association (NOPA) praised President Bush for sending to Congress the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (CTPA) that benefits the U.S. oilseed and meat industries. The removal of trade barriers between the United States and Colombia will create greater market access opportunities for U.S. processors, farmers and livestock producers.

NOPA urges Congress to support and pass the Trade Promotion Agreement with Colombia.

Currently, no U.S. agricultural exports enjoy duty-free access to Colombia. In contrast, over 99.9 percent of Colombia's current exports already receive duty-free treatment into the U.S. market.

Colombia is the largest market for U.S. agricultural exports in South America. As a result of the CTPA, Colombian import duties will be immediately eliminated for U.S. exports of soybeans and soybean meal and flour. Colombia will immediately eliminate duty-free access for crude soybean oil through a 31,200-ton tariff-rate-quota with four percent annual growth. Colombia will phase out the out-of-quota tariff rate of 24 percent for crude soybean oil over ten years and will phase out its 24 percent tariff for refined soybean oil over five years.

Colombia is already an important export market for U.S. oilseed farmers and the rest of the oilseed industry. U.S. soy exports to Colombia totaled \$181 million (soybeans - \$97 million, soybean meal - \$77 million, and soybean oil - \$7 million).

In the CTPA, the Colombian government agreed to recognize the meat inspection system of the U.S. as equivalent to its own system. This will provide direct benefits to our livestock customers, and gains for the U.S. soy industry.

NOPA, established in 1929, represents the U.S. soybean, sunflower, canola, flaxseed and safflower seed-crushing industries. Its activities focus on the enhancing the competitiveness and profitability of the U.S. oilseed processing industry. NOPA is comprised of 14 member companies who process over 1.6 billion bushels of oilseeds annually at 65 plants in 20 states.

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