Legislative Watch

U.S. Finalizes FTA with Colombia

On July 8, the U.S. and Colombia finalized the text of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Bush Administration plans to notify Congress in the near future of its intent to sign the agreement. The agreement will then likely be signed in approximately three months, after which the House Ways and Means Committee, and the Senate Finance Committee, will hold hearings on the agreement before taking up the bill to actually implement the agreement.

A congressional vote on the Colombian FTA will likely have to wait until Congress votes on formal implementing legislation for the previously completed U.S.-Oman and U.S.-Peru FTAs, as well as a vote on granting Vietnam Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR). Given that timeline, Congress will likely consider the Colombia FTA's implementing legislation late this fall. The Administration continues to urge Congress to consider the Peru and Colombia agreements together, but Congressional leadership has not yet indicated that it would consider this approach.

FFA RACE DAY 2006

Michigan International Speedway

FFA has developed a fun-filled hospitality day for everyone during the NASCAR Busch Series race on

Saturday August 19

Brooklyn, MI • Event & pit tours begin at 8 a.m.* • Race time TBD

HOSPITALITY PACKAGE INCLUDES

- Reserved grandstand seating in turn 4
- FREE pit passes: 18 and older (appropriate attire only)**
- Access to FFA hospitality tent in North Village
- Morning coffee and lunch (served before the race in the FFA hospitality tent)
- Meet NASCAR personalities at hospitality tent
- Prizes and give-aways all day long (grand prize: portable welder)

All for $70 per person***

(Estimated value of package $175)

Tickets available until Aug. 4 • Race fans call

(800) 354-1010

Just say, "I'm with the FFA" to receive this amazing package!

You do not have to be a member to attend.

LINCOLN WELDERS

Proceeds support the Michigan and Ohio FFA Foundations.

*Time subject to change. ** No sleeveless shirts/tank tops, shorts or open-toed shoes. ***$9 shipping & handling added to all orders.

House, Senate Hold Dueling Hearings on Immigration Reform

Following the Senate passage of an immigration reform bill at the end of May, the House announced that it would hold hearings on this issue across the country. In response, the Senate is also holding hearings. The first of these hearings were held at the beginning of July and will continue throughout the summer.

The House hearings are expected to focus on the need for securing the southern U.S. border, and providing a critical examination of various provisions in the Senate immigration reform bill. The Senate hearings are expected to center around the need for a comprehensive approach to the immigration reform challenge, including provisions to address those persons who currently are here illegally, and to establish a guest worker program.

National Milk Producers Federation continues to stress that the dairy industry needs a comprehensive program (as was reflected by the Senate legislation), and that the AgJOBS provisions of that bill provide a very reasonable and workable way forward on this issue.

For assistance in contacting members of the legislature, visit NMPF's Dairy G.R.E.A.T. Web site by clicking on the NMPF G.R.E.A.T. logo at NMPF's main site, www.nmpf.org. The site contains the latest updates on several pressing legislative issues.