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USTR AND FDA WELCOME COLLABORATION BY APEC AND THE WORLD BANK TO ENHANCE FOOD SAFETY AND FACILITATE FOOD TRADE

Memorandum of Understanding Aims to Prevent Safety Incidents in Food Supply Chains

Big Sky, MT – At the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum meetings being held this week in Big Sky, Montana, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Demetrios Marantis and Commissioner of Food and Drugs Margaret A. Hamburg, M.D., welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum and the World Bank to collaborate on food safety training programs designed to enhance food safety and to facilitate trade throughout the Asia Pacific region. These programs will enable more growers, more producers, and more food safety officials to understand and utilize preventive controls – resulting in safer food for consumers, and fewer safety incidents in food trade.

“Expanding the use of preventive controls in food supply chains and building the capacity of regulatory systems prevents food safety incidents, protects public health, and leads to greater confidence in trade, thereby creating a more prosperous region,” said Ambassador Marantis. **“I would like to recognize the critically important partnerships forged by the Food Safety Cooperation Forum’s Partnership Training Institute Network with industry, academia and international organizations, such as the World Bank. These ground-breaking partnerships between governments and stakeholders show a real commitment to expand the use of preventive controls.”**

“This collaborative effort is extremely beneficial to enhancing global food safety as the APEC region accounts for 41 percent of the world population and nearly 50 percent of global food production,” said Commissioner Hamburg, MD. **“The effort is also timely given the implementation of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act in the United States. The law requires the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to develop a comprehensive plan to expand the technical, scientific, and regulatory**

food safety capacity of foreign governments and industries that export food to the United States. The leveraging of resources among the parties to this agreement will support the United States, and in particular, the FDA as it seeks to fulfill its mission to promote and protect the public health."

The Partnership Training Institute Network was a U.S.-led initiative endorsed by APEC Leaders in 2008. Additional information is available at <http://fscf-ptin.apec.org>.

Ambassador Marantis also noted that advancing regulatory cooperation and convergence are key priorities for the United States as during its APEC host year. He called the work of the Food Safety Cooperation Forum and its Partnership Training Institute Network an example of the regulatory cooperation that the United States would like to see across APEC.

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