

## **Statement from Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on G-20 Action Plan to Address Food Security and Food Price Volatility**

PARIS, June 23, 2011—Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack made the following statement today on the G-20 Action Plan to address food security and food price volatility:

"The consensus reached today by the G-20 Agricultural Ministers marks an historic union of resolve in combating the pressing challenges of hunger and food price volatility confronting our world with greater regularity. Together, the G-20 nations are committed to increasing agricultural production through use of improved practices and technologies and a commitment to new and expanded research and development. To that end, we support the launch of an International Research Initiative for Wheat Improvement to help nations coordinate research efforts on this crucial staple crop.

"Moreover, we recognize the need for participation in global agricultural monitoring systems and early warning systems to improve crop production projections and weather forecasting, and we call upon international organizations to create links between existing global, regional and national systems. The need for market transparency and consistency with science-based rule-making systems among our nations and the international community is stronger than ever. Purposefully then, we support establishing the groundwork for an international agricultural market information system, or AMIS, that if fully supported and utilized, will mitigate volatility and reduce market distorting signals by promoting greater shared understanding of food production and price information.

"We have also reaffirmed our opposition to erecting trade barriers through export bans. In particular, we recognize that food export bans restricting humanitarian aid penalize the most needy. Significantly, the G-20 members agree to remove food export restrictions for food purchased for humanitarian purposes. Furthermore, our work to support innovation in the development of non-food feedstocks and next generation renewable fuels will continue to help offset instability in the energy market, which accounts for the bulk of food and commodity price fluctuations in the past decade.

"In the end, this agreement is only as good as the actions we take together to aggressively confront food security's difficult challenges, but our cooperation as reflected today is a significant achievement for the nearly one billion people grappling with hunger each day."