

Op-Ed: Wisconsin Will Benefit from USMCA

Wisconsinites know how to grow outstanding crops and manufacture excellent products. We can compete with anybody in the world if given a fair playing field. Unfortunately, we've been held back by trade deals that unfairly damage the markets for our crops and products – but that's starting to change. Last year, the United States renegotiated trade terms with Japan to reduce their tariffs on U.S. agricultural products. Now, on July 1st of this year, the much-awaited USMCA (US-Mexico-Canada) trade deal goes into effect. This deal is the product of years of hard work and will mean expanded markets for our products and more jobs for Wisconsinites.

Mexico and Canada purchase nearly \$150 billion worth of goods from the American Midwest each year – a figure that will likely increase by 5-7% when the USMCA is implemented. Wisconsin is well-positioned to benefit from this deal because Canada and Mexico are among our top buyers. In fact, Canada spends more than \$1.4 billion annually on our agricultural products alone. That's money coming back into our neighborhoods and our communities.

The USMCA will help two industries in Central and Western Wisconsin that have seen rough times of late – dairy and paper products. Under this new deal, increased access to Canada's dairy markets could increase U.S. exports by a quarter of a billion dollars – a lot of which would flow directly into Wisconsin. It's also worth noting that Wisconsin exports nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars' worth of paper products to Canada and Mexico. Fairer markets will only help increase demand.

President Trump, leaders in Congress, and more than 350 organizations across the country worked hard to advocate for this deal, and its enactment proves that positive things do happen when we work together. The USMCA provides a fair playing field here in North America. It's a good deal for Wisconsin farmers and workers, and a good deal for America.