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## PRESS RELEASE

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## FTAA Agriculture Proposals Would Hurt Farmers, Forum Concludes

### NGO Representatives To Brief Negotiators Today on Recommendations

Miami - Proposed agricultural trade rules at the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Ministerial would continue a failed policy approach that has damaged the livelihood of farmers in developed and developing countries, concluded a panel of experts from countries throughout the Americas.

The Americas Trade and Sustainable Development Forum (ATSDF) was held in Miami on Monday and Tuesday inside the security perimeter with experts from countries throughout the Americas. The ATSDF covered the FTAA's different components - including agriculture. Representatives from the ATSDF will brief FTAA delegates today on their findings. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) organized the agriculture forum. IATP's Dennis Olson will present the Forum's findings on agriculture to the FTAA delegates from 4:30-6pm.

In a statement, the ATSDF on agriculture determined that FTAA proposals "represent a continuation of failed policies, and are therefore unacceptable." The forum stated that, "Putting an end to agricultural dumping should be the highest and most immediate priority for fairer trade rules."

Specifically, the ATSDF recommended that FTAA agriculture trade rules should:

- Grant all countries the right to develop their own agricultural and food policies, including the right to manage both production and inventories.
- Grant countries the right to protect themselves from dumping of agricultural commodities at below the cost of production.
- Prohibit dumping by any country into international markets.
- Provide farmers with a fair price and consumers with a safe, secure and affordable food supply that is environmentally sustainable.
- Reduce the anti-competitive market distortions caused by the disproportionate market power of agribusiness cartels.

On the environment and agriculture, the ATSDF found that the FTAA proposal externalizes many environmental costs, such as pesticide pollution, and that "any future trade agreement should include mechanisms to assess, avoid, and mitigate these environmental impacts."

On genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in agriculture, the Forum called for the implementation of the "precautionary principle." The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which already sets international rules on GMOs, should take precedence over the FTAA. "We therefore oppose the proposed strengthening of the SPS Agreement that is reflected in the FTAA negotiating text, which would further restrict the rights of countries to implement the precautionary principle," the ATSDF forum concluded.

For more on the ATSDF, go to: <http://www.miami.edu/nsc/pages/FTAA.html>

To read the ATSDF Agriculture recommendations, go to: [www.tradeobservatory.org](http://www.tradeobservatory.org)

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