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Weekly Trade Spotlight: California to host the 13th Round of Trans-Pacific Partnership Negotiations

07/02/2012 - 9:28am

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement was created to enhance trade and investment among the TPP partner countries. These countries include the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Chile and Peru. Both Mexico and Canada have also been invited to join the TPP but will not be participating in this week's negotiations.



Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Congressional Affairs Mac Campbell talks with stakeholders at the TPP negotiations in Dallas in May.

This week, trade policy makers and stakeholders from nine Asia-Pacific nations will be gathering in San Diego, California to participate in the 13th Round of the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations. TPP negotiators are seeking creative and balanced approaches to 21st century trade and investment issues that greatly affect California, the second largest state exporter in the United States.

U.S. negotiators will be discussing how to enhance trade and investment opportunities in some of California's leading goods exports. These include innovative computer and electronic products, transportation equipment, machinery, and chemicals, for example. In addition, TPP negotiators are seeking to enhance trade in services, which employ 3 out of every 4 California workers on average.

Companies like Casa Herrera, a family-run food production manufacturing company in Southern California, see the negotiations as creating opportunities that allow them to add more jobs. Casa Herrera was founded by Frank Herrera in

1951 and now employs 130 employees, including 11 members of the Herrera family. The company is known for selling food manufacturing machinery that can produce more than 92,000 tortillas per hour.

Jonathan Lacour, Casa Herrera's Vice President for Legal Affairs, believes the success of the TPP will benefit the company. He says discussions to increase and modernize food production among TPP countries could provide more employment opportunities within the company. "A ten percent increase in sales would mean an additional 50 or so jobs," he said.

Overall, the TPP represents a significant opportunity for California exporters to build on their already strong ties to the Asia-Pacific region. In 2011, the state exported \$66.1 billion worth of goods to the Asia-Pacific region, and current negotiations will strengthen ties to this region – a region that represents 40 percent of total global trade. And with Mexico and Canada set to join TPP negotiations following Congress' 90-day consultation period, the TPP also offers California an opportunity to further develop its trade relations with its top two export markets. In 2011, California exported \$26 billion to Mexico and \$17.2 billion to Canada.