

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Food Manufacturers Urge Consideration of Consequences in Border Closure**

The Midwest Food Products Association today urged President Trump to consider the consequences of his following through on his threat to shut down the United States' southern border.

MWFPA President Nick George said that shutting down the border with Mexico would damage the U.S. economy, arguing, "Among the biggest victims of a border shutdown would be American manufacturing and that includes the Midwest's food manufacturing industry." MWFPA represents food manufacturers and their allied industries in Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Mexico is among the top export markets for U.S. major agricultural commodities and is number two for soybeans, pork, and processed foods according to George.

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Food manufacturing is already suffering from the Section 232 tariffs on tinplate steel – a unique type of steel that is specifically made for food cans - and lack of progress on U.S. trade agreements, noted George. Tariffs on imported steel and aluminum have left food manufacturers unable to get the raw materials they need domestically because U.S. suppliers do not make the specialized steel and aluminum that the companies require.

Of the states represented by MWFPFA, Mexico is the food manufacturer's second largest export customer, purchasing over \$1 billion in 2018.

"It is hard to comprehend the impact closing the U.S.-Mexico border would have on U.S. agriculture, and both the American and Mexican food industries" added George. "Food should not be used as a device for implementing immigration policy."

#### **Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin Processed Food Exports to Mexico at a Glance:**

- Mexico is Minnesota's second largest export market. Processed foods are among the state's top five exports. Manufactured food exports to Mexico amounted to \$329.7 million in 2018.
- Mexico too is among the Wisconsin's top five export markets, ranking number two behind Canada. Processed foods are among the state's top five export categories representing \$192.3 million in exports.
- Illinois is the largest of the three states in manufactured food exports to Mexico registering \$583.7 million in 2018. Processed foods are also among the state's top five exports