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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2011

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NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS BODE WELL FOR KOREAN BEEF TRADE

OAKLAND, CA – National Meat Association welcomed an announcement today by U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk indicating that once the U.S.-South Korea (KORUS) Free Trade Agreement has entered into force, the United States will request consultations under the existing beef Protocol with South Korea to discuss the Protocol's full application.

The Protocol, which was initiated in 2008, addresses import health requirements that affect market access for U.S. beef and beef products and is a separate agreement from the KORUS FTA. The announcement was transmitted in a letter from Kirk to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT), who has been a strong supporter of the 2008 Protocol since and even prior to its inception.

Also today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded an additional \$1 million of FY2011 Market Access Program (MAP) funds to the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), of which NMA is a member serving on its Export Committee. These funds will bolster ongoing beef promotion in South Korea. USDA also welcomed USMEF's creation of a 5-year, \$10 million initiative to promote U.S. beef in Korea.

"These moves will hopefully spur movement on the Korea trade agreement, which will be a boost to our members and to the entire red-meat industry," said NMA CEO Barry Carpenter. "We appreciate that the USTR and USDA have taken these steps, and for the support of Chairman Baucus."

National Meat Association is a non-profit trade association. Since 1946, NMA has represented meat packers and processors, equipment manufacturers and food suppliers who provide services to the meat industry. The association has members throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia and Mexico.