



News from  
U.S. Congressman

**Gil Gutknecht**

*First District, Minnesota*

507-252-9841 (Bryan Anderson - Rochester, Minn.)

507-252-9915 (Fax - Rochester, Minn.)

[bryan.anderson@mail.house.gov](mailto:bryan.anderson@mail.house.gov)

[www.gil.house.gov](http://www.gil.house.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 10, 2003

## **Gutknecht: Negotiators must seek level playing field**

*Washington, DC* – First District Congressman Gil Gutknecht today issued the following statement regarding this week’s trade discussions in Cancun, Mexico. As part of the World Trade Organization’s Doha Round of trade negotiations, officials from around the world are meeting September 10-14, 2003 to discuss further world trade liberalization. One of the most critical issues on the negotiating table is agriculture.

“Trade holds great promise for the United States and American agriculture. Our farmers are the most productive and efficient in the world. Despite this, trade barriers and unfair, market distorting practices around the world are a threat to future opportunities for our producers.

The Cancun trade discussions and the Doha Round of trade negotiations can be successful, but only if they level the playing field and allow our farmers to compete fairly with other nations. For example, Europe spends nearly \$4 billion on export subsidies and the United States spends less than \$60 million. That is hardly a level playing field.

I’m hopeful that Administration officials understand how critical these negotiations are to America’s farmers and are able to successfully move forward in Cancun. American farmers can compete, but only if we help level the playing field.”

The House Agriculture Committee has held several hearings and meetings with Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and U.S. Trade Representative Bob Zoellick to discuss trade negotiations. Congressman Gutknecht has consistently advocated fairer trade and increased market opportunities for American agriculture.