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Beef + Lamb New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association welcome Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations

This week's fourth round of negotiations to expand the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) is an important step towards a free trade agreement (FTA) with key export markets for New Zealand's red meat sector, say Beef + Lamb New Zealand Chairman, Mike Petersen and Meat Industry Association Chairman, Bill Falconer.

Petersen says the two organisations are seeking a high-quality, comprehensive agreement in relation to agriculture.

"We will be looking for the elimination of tariffs and barriers to trade – essentially creating a competitive playing field for New Zealand's red meat sector."

Falconer said the TPP will provide strategic benefits for meat trade interests in the Asia/Pacific region.

"The United States is New Zealand's largest and most important market for beef and is also an important market for sheepmeat. However, New Zealand's beef exports to the United States complement their domestic production, which benefits both New Zealand and United States beef producers. Lean New Zealand beef is mixed with United States domestic beef to produce ground beef products used predominantly in the food service industry. This increases demand for United States beef trimmings which would otherwise be in less demand by their beef processors."

Petersen said the agreement would also deliver opportunities with the growing list of other participants in the TPP, including Australia, Singapore, Brunei, Chile, Peru, Vietnam and Malaysia. It has the potential to drive new trade flows in the powerhouse Asia/Pacific region.

"The TPP offers a big prize for like minded countries working together."

For more information contact: Beef + Lamb New Zealand Chairman, Mike Petersen 021 243 7344 or Meat Industry Association Chairman, Bill Falconer 021 939 520.