



WELCOME TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE TRAVELED FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO COME HERE, TO MINNESOTA ... LAND OF 10,000 LAKES, AGRICULTURE, AND THE NEW POLITICAL “ZOO.”

“ZOOS” ARE THE SAME ALL OVER THE WORLD – RARE ANIMALS GO THERE SO PEOPLE CAN LOOK AT THEM UP CLOSE. I’M A VERY RARE KIND OF ANIMAL ... A REFORM ANIMAL ... THE FIRST OF MY KIND. BUT IT’S NOT ME EVERYBODY WANTS TO SEE -- OUR TOURISM INDUSTRY IS “UP” BECAUSE EVERYBODY WANTS TO COME HERE AND SEE THE PEOPLE WHO ELECTED ME GOVERNOR.

SO WELCOME TO MINNESOTA, WHERE I’M PROUD TO SAY THIS NEW TRIPARTISAN ZOO – I MEAN, GOVERNMENT --WORKS VERY WELL.

AGRICULTURE IS A TOP PRIORITY OF MY ADMINISTRATION:

- One out of four people in Minnesota makes a living connected to farming or adding value to farm products. Agriculture is very, very important to our entire state. We are tied very directly to the land.
- I appointed a Farm Cabinet within the first month of taking office so Agriculture Commissioner Gene Hugoson, who is here today, could work TOGETHER with the departments that oversee tax policy, banking policy, trade & economic development policy, finance, and planning.

IT ISN’T EASY BEING A FARMER IN MINNESOTA.

I know that now, although I grew up in the middle of the State’s biggest city with my mother’s tomatoes.

Now I live on a 32 acre farm with my wife, who trains Horses and raises a hay crop.

As GOVERNOR, I’ve seen clearly that:

- The forces of nature are harsh here in Minnesota, and areas of our state have been hit hard for several years in a row.
- Our own federal government has a habit of micro-managing industries, like dairy, to try to control prices. It’s like physics – push it here and it comes out



over there. The greatest reform is bringing a FREE MARKET philosophy so farmers can compete fairly.

- The economy is changing rapidly all over the world, and Minnesota farmers feel those changes very directly from Europe and Asia and South America and elsewhere. Again, we need to be able to compete on a FAIR, OPEN, and LEVEL playing field.
- Trade policies that are open are a win-win. Protectionism is a lose-lose for everybody. That's why I have high hopes for the Millenium Trade Talks in Seattle this fall, and hope you world leaders do, too.

In this rapidly changing world, no single country has all the answers.

In fact, I'm amazed at how complicated farming has become:

- FOUR graduate degrees (accounting, economics, environmental science, agronomy – and maybe political science).
- When I got my briefings on agriculture, I told Commissioner Hugoson "No wonder farmers don't have a night life!"

On a more serious front, anything we can do to understand each other better is a big plus for humanity.

If I have one great hope, it is that our nation's leaders will ALL stop using food as a weapon. That's the message I delivered last week in Washington DC when I met with The President's top advisors and testified before Congress.

This GLOBAL SUMMIT is an important step toward better understanding.

Thank you for choosing Minnesota as your gathering place, and I hope you can take time while you are here to enjoy both our great Cities and the beautiful farm country we are so proud of.

Thank you.