Welcome Speech – by Gary Martin – President and CEO of the North American Export Grain Association and President of the International Grain Trade Coalition.

“Good Evening and welcome Ladies and Gentlemen. It is my great honor to be with you this evening and represent the membership of the North American Export Grain Association. It is very much our pleasure to Celebrate the Japanese Grain and Oilseed Industry at this Reception.

The long and very successful relationship between the US and Japan in the trade of grains and oilseeds is very much a great reason to celebrate. My colleagues – Mr. Sam Bonilla, Ryan Olson and I just finished a seminar with about 60 of you to examine Contracts and Best Practices for the International Grain and Oilseed trade. The Japan-US experience indeed provides for the highest of standards of best practices. We are especially well positioned to continue our successful history to meet the opportunities and challenges of the future.

I want to thank all of you for being such a big part of this success. And thank you working with NAEGA to Make Trade Work. My special thanks to our Colleagues who have been so helpful in organizing the events:

* Japan Feed Trade Association, Mr. Nishida,
* Mitsui, Mr. Matsumoto and the staff of Mr. Tsunoda in New York City
* The US Grains Council Mr. Hamamoto and his staff here in Tokyo

Your assistance and leadership is as always critical to our success. I also want to thank and extend an especially warm welcome to all officials from the Government of Japan and the Government of the United States – our relationship with you is at the foundation of the success we celebrate this evening.

Before I invite Japan Feed Trade Association Chairman Mr. Tanaka and the head of the Grain Trade and Operations Division at MAFF Mr. Ushikusa to address us, we welcome Mr. Christopher Riker,   Senior Agricultural Attaché from the US Embassy to make remarks.

Chris we look forward to your words *(Chris then speaks)*

***(****Martin)*: Thank you Chris and please extend our appreciation to your colleagues throughout the USDA for the good work you do.

I would now like to invite Mr. Ushikusa, head of the Grain Trade Operations Division at MAFF to say a few words.

Mr. Tanaka, NAEGA has the strongest of relationships with JFTA and its members, your thoughts are welcome *(Tanaka speaks*)

*(Martin) :* Thank you Mr. Tanaka, your words are prefect to begin our celebration!

***(****Martin Toast)*: Let us all now enjoy this opportunity for friendship and learning. Let us raise our glasses in recognition of good business and fellowship now and in the future

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