

## FAQs

### *What is IPC?*

The International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to developing and advocating policies that promote a more open and equitable global food system. IPC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

### *When was IPC founded and who founded it?*

IPC was founded with institutional support provided by the Rockefeller Foundation. Comprised then of twenty-one members, IPC held its first meeting in Oxford, England, on October 8-9, 1987. Its first Chairman was Lord Henry Plumb, former President of the European Parliament and a highly respected international farm leader.

### *Why was IPC established?*

A group of agricultural trade experts came together at the beginning of the Uruguay Round, the first negotiations to address agriculture within the GATT, to found IPC. Their purpose was to serve as a balanced, non-governmental group of leaders in agriculture who could enhance the policy dialogue by providing advice and counsel to governments, stakeholders, and the interested public. Outside of the political arena, they sought to develop economically realistic and politically feasible alternatives to current policies that would satisfy the agricultural sector goals of governments and society as a whole, without distorting production, consumption, and trade.

### *What does IPC do?*

IPC pursues pragmatic trade and development policies in food and agriculture to meet the world's growing needs. To this end, it convenes influential policymakers, agribusiness executives, farm leaders, and academics from developed and developing countries to build consensus around agricultural and food policy issues. IPC conveys its recommendations directly to policymakers and decision-makers around the world through policy papers, seminars, conferences, and personal contacts. In the process, it clarifies complex issues and fosters broader stakeholder participation in food and agricultural policy.

### *Why is IPC's work important?*

IPC was formed to promote a more open and equitable global food system – a goal which is still far from realized. As agricultural products continue to be among the most difficult to liberalize, and can serve to hold back trade liberalization in other sectors, IPC's efforts to clarify policy issues in this field, build consensus around recommendations, and communicate these options to decision-makers are more important than ever. IPC is particularly concerned with achieving greater market access and a level playing field for developing countries. With 1.2 billion people living on \$1 a day, economic development is still clearly needed in most of the world. Experience shows that countries that are integrated into the global economy grow faster than

those that are not and that open trade is a key determinant of economic growth. This, in turn, is the only path to sustainable poverty reduction.

Many developing countries have competitive advantages in agricultural production, but their ability to compete in the world trading system is impeded by protectionist measures instituted by developed country governments; often their own policies also serve to discourage greater participation in the trading system. Thus, IPC continues to push for liberalization in food and agricultural trade to increase the efficiency of food production and distribution and spur economic development in the countries that need it most.

*Who are the IPC members?*

IPC members are leaders in agriculture and food policy. They are drawn from academia, agribusiness, farmer organizations, and governments. Their ranks include business executives, former trade negotiators, farmers, researchers, economists, and former ministers of agriculture and trade. However, members serve on the Council as individuals, not on behalf of their institutions. This impartiality, coupled with its broad and diverse membership, allows IPC to be a microcosm of the interests at stake in global agricultural policy debates.

*How does someone become a member of IPC?*

An independent group of leaders in food and agriculture from developed, developing, and least developed countries, IPC's members are chosen to ensure the Council's credible and impartial approach to food and agricultural trade policy. Nominations for membership can be made by any IPC member. The IPC Board and its Chief Executive make selections from the list of nominees. Prospective members are then issued a letter of invitation from the Chairman. Upon acceptance of this invitation, a new agricultural leader joins IPC.

*How is IPC funded?*

Approximately half of IPC's funding [link to annual reports] comes to it in the form of annual contributions by its structural members [link to Funders page]. Members contribute at the Sustaining (\$25,000), Affiliate (\$10,000), and Associate (\$5,000) levels. Structural members are leading businesses, membership associations, and investment banks in agriculture and food production.

IPC is also supported by project-specific funding from governments and foundations [link to Funders page]. Recent contributors included the US Department of Agriculture, the United Nations Foundation, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

In addition to its annual funding, IPC receives financial and in-kind support [link to Funders page] for its activities.

Please contact Amy Testa at [testa@agritrade.org](mailto:testa@agritrade.org) to inquire about funding and sponsorship opportunities.