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USDA, USTR Appoints NARA President, Key NARA Staff as New Agricultural Trade Advisors

ALEXANDRIA, VA, August 24, 2023 – Kent Swisher, President and CEO of the North American Renderers Association (NARA), has been selected to serve on the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) [Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee \(APAC\)](#), as announced in a [press release](#) issued by USDA on August 24th.

Swisher, who previously held a position on the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Trade in Animals and Animal Products (ATAC), joins 130 other new private-sector representatives from the diverse U.S. Agriculture community, announced by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Thomas Vilsack, and U.S. Trade Representative, Katherine Tai, appointed to serve on seven agricultural trade advisory committees.

Additionally, Dana Johnson Downing, NARA's Senior Vice President of International Programs, and Dr. Charles Starkey, NARA's Vice President of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs, have both been announced in two other ATAC positions.

Dana Johnson Downing has been appointed for the first time to serve on the [ATAC for Trade in Animals and Animal Products](#), the advisory position Swisher held before his appointment to the APAC.

Dr. Charles Starkey has been appointed to serve on the [ATAC for Trade in Grains, Feed, Oilseeds, and Planting Seeds](#). This is also Starkey's first time serving, and notably the first time NARA has had representation on this committee.

Of the new appointments Swisher said, "We are honored to have been appointed to serve in these advisory roles by Ambassador Tai and Secretary Vilsack. These appointments are an example of how a small association like NARA consistently punches above its weight because our team brings a wide range of policy and technical expertise that can help guide the Administration's strategy on trade."

The new group of advisors will join the 70 existing committee members whose terms have not expired.

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About the North American Renderers Association

The North American Renderers Association (NARA) represents the interests of the North American rendering industry to regulatory and other governmental agencies, promotes the greater use of animal byproducts, and fosters the opening and expansion of trade between foreign buyers and North American exporters. In addition to its U.S.-based headquarters, the association maintains offices in Mexico and Hong Kong, and has market consultants in strategic locations around the world. NARA publishes a bi-monthly trade magazine, *Render*. For more information, visit www.nara.org.