

# Bereuter supports liberal trade talk

By BRAD DAVIS  
Assignment Reporter

The increasing global economy has left the United States in a position that allows businesses to reach the 95 to 96 percent of consumers living outside U.S. borders, Rep. Doug Bereuter said Monday.

Bereuter, who spoke at UNL's College of Business Administration Monday night, said since the end of the Cold War, U.S. trade with other countries was no longer "subordinate to security concerns."

That lessened risk, combined with the United States' and other countries' liberalization of trade restrictions and tariffs, has increased opportunities for small and middle-sized U.S. businesses, Bereuter said.

"Small and mid-size businesses do not have the resources to overcome foreign trade barriers," Bereuter said.

With the liberalization of trade policies, he said, smaller firms would have a chance to compete with larger firms that have more resources available to them.

Larger firms, he said, could simply invest in the country where they desire to do business. For example, a large U.S. company could buy a factory in the "target country," thereby bypassing any tariffs or restrictions it would normally face.

Bereuter said high tariffs and trade restrictions had to be eliminated because of trade deficits the United States had with the Asian-Pacific region.

Bereuter, a Republican congressman since 1978, is the chairman of the Asia and the Pacific subcommittee and the vice chairman of the House International Relations Committee.

He said U.S. trade deficits with China would exceed \$40 billion this year. The deficit exists because of "non-tariff barriers," such as

Chinese government-run companies, he said.

In response to this deficit, Bereuter and Rep. Tom Ewing, R-Ill., have proposed the China Market Access and Export Opportunities Act that "requires that China either make an acceptable offer to join the World Trade Organization or face 'snap-back' tariffs."

This bill addresses China's status as a most favored nation, which allows it to trade with the United States at "normal" tariffs, Bereuter said.

If China does not make an acceptable effort to join the World Trade Organization by lessening the non-tariff restrictions placed upon U.S. businesses exporting to China, addressing certain human rights concerns, it will face increased tariffs (4 to 7 percent) on its imports to the United States.

Protectionists, he said, have spoken out against making trade agreements more liberal with other countries — often because of a misunderstanding of what the agreements would do.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln economics Professor Craig MacPhee said greater opportunities to purchase imports were the most important part of liberalizing trade barriers.

"The benefits we get from importing ... when we are able to purchase a variety of goods, sometimes more cheaply than importing, our consumers become better off," MacPhee said.

MacPhee said global trade also encouraged U.S. businesses to be more competitive.

"It's an incentive to invest in new equipment to produce better, more-quality products," he said.

Bereuter pledged to fight "protectionist forces," and support the liberalization of trade.

MacPhee said isolationist views on trade were contrary to a free society.

# Center ensures quality

■ The UNL food science department fights for food safety through education.

By JOSH FUNK  
Assignment Reporter

Long before an outbreak of E. coli ever makes the news, the faculty of the UNL food science and technology department work to prevent it with education and training.

Along with the Food Processing Center on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus, the food science department works to ensure the safety of food when it reaches the consumer.

"We are involved with every aspect of food processing from farm to shelf," food safety extension specialist Mindy Brashears said.

The department does research and practical testing and works with producers to develop safe manufacturing practices.

One such program is the Hazard Analysis in Critical Control Points, which is used in meat processing plants nationwide.

"The HACCP program sets up checkpoints and procedures in the processing plants to check for contamination in the meat," Brashears said. "Everything is documented so problems can be traced."

HACCP is used in the larger meat processing plants right now, but it is a big expense for the plants, Brashears said.

"The plan is tailored to meet each plant's needs," Brashears said.

Even with HACCP, meat processors test only for the presence of generic E. coli, microbiologist Dianne Peters said.

"They are not required to test for the specific strain, O157:H7, that causes illness," Peters said.

"E. coli O157:H7 can be a problem with hamburger and foods like produce and apple cider, she said.

"A low concentration of E. coli can still cause sickness," Peters said.

The difficulty with an E. coli O157:H7 outbreak in hamburger is tracing it to its source, she said.

"Hamburger meat is ground up

"We test new products to make sure they do what they say they do before they reach stores."

DIANNE PETERS  
microbiologist

from so many different sources that it is impossible to trace," Peters said. And, Brashears said, the processors only can do so much.

"Even with HACCP, consumers have to live up to their responsibility and cook their meat thoroughly," Brashears said.

In addition to educating producers, the department also works with restaurants and schools.

"We do food-handling classes and teach kids how to properly wash their hands," Peters said.

Americans have to learn to cook and wash their food, she said.

"People just take food quality for granted in this country."

Because produce is not cooked, consumers must be sure to wash everything thoroughly, she said.

"In testing produce we have found concentrations of bacteria several times greater than anything we see in meat," Peters said.

Another dangerous area of produce is ready-to-eat products, she said.

"That packaging worries me," Peters said. "There is lots of bacteria there."

Organically grown food can also be a haven for bacteria, she said.

"All that food is grown in manure," Peters said. "Then people just eat it without washing."

Another part of the food science and technology department is the Food Processing Center, which works with product development.

The processing center works with entrepreneurs and existing businesses to develop new products for the market.

"We help people create a product that will meet all of the FDA requirements," Peters said.

When businesses look to develop a new secret sauce, they bring their ideas to the Food Processing Center.

"We consult confidentially with businesses to develop new foods," she said.

The food science and technology department also investigates the claims of new products.

"We test new products to make sure they do what they say they do before they reach stores," Peters said.

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# Group works to reverse trend

By AMANDA SCHINDLER  
Staff Reporter

## Involvement

One of UNL's foreign student groups, the Pakistan Students Organization, is trying to fight its way back to a prominent presence on campus.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln organization has watched its membership decline from nearly 100 members to about 30 during the past few years, and with it, its influence at UNL.

One veteran member, Saad Alavi, hopes to rebuild the PSA's influence with the help of other Pakistani students and a revamped constitution.

Alavi, a senior finance information systems major and native of Karachi, Pakistan, is also the organization's new president.

Along with changes in the group's constitution, he hopes to boost the PSA back to its former presence by reapplying for recognition as an official student organization by the Office of Student Involvement, and developing a Web page.

Previous events in PSA, which began in 1984, brought much attention to the group, he said. The 1993 and 1994 culture shows boasted Gov. Ben Nelson as the guest speaker, the first of any such culture show at UNL attended by the politician.

With its decline in membership PSA has had to take a back seat to other organizations with larger memberships. Furthermore, 12 of the 30 members are graduate students — making it difficult

to keep them involved.

With so few active members, large events are impossible to conduct.

Another major setback for the group is funding, Alavi said. Larger organizations can raise the money they need through dues, but with only 30 members, that's not enough.

The PSA turned to other fund-raising methods, such as the popular balloon sales outside Memorial Stadium before home football games. Students can buy the balloons, which are supplied by Student Involvement, and release them during the first touchdown of the game.

Various grants also have helped PSA, but those aren't sufficient either, Alavi said, so the group's activities have been limited.

Nevertheless, the new president said he saw this time as a period of rebuilding.

"We've been lying low these past few months," Alavi said, "so we can come back with a bang."

That comeback will involve a two-part plan. First, Alavi is considering a change in the constitution allowing non-Pakistani students to become fully active in the PSA, excluding voting. Another idea is making a PSA Web page, soon to be completed.

Asim Raja Raza, a computer science graduate student, is designing the page for the PSA. The Web site is accessible at <http://cse.unl.edu/~asim/psa/mainpage.html>, but won't be fully complete until the updated constitution and member list

are added.

Once complete, the Web page will provide a way for PSA members to find information on meetings and activities, and also a way for prospective Pakistani students to find out about the group, and possibly increase the Pakistani population at UNL.

Instead of having to call the office of International Affairs and request information about the organization, students would have it at their fingertips because the Web page address will be distributed with UNL admission information.

"The main benefit is for new students coming to Pakistan," said Raza, who has been a member of the PSA since spring. "Apart from that, any local people wanting to find out about my culture could get on the Web site also."

PSA, and organizations like it, are important to the university, Alavi said.

Through events such as the International Affairs-sponsored International Bazaar, in which many different cultural organizations set up booths demonstrating their unique customs and give free taste tests of native cooking, the PSA and cultural diversity groups can reach out to UNL's students.

PSA remains involved in such activities to fulfill its mission: promoting friendship and cultural understanding between different ethnic groups.


"Our goal is to have at least four events per semester, which would involve all the members and help keep them tightly knit," Alavi said. "It's important to keep (the members) enthusiastic about serving the purpose of the mission statement, otherwise the passion will die out."

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