



# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
November 19, 2010

**Contact:** Nancy Foster  
703-442-8850  
NFoster@usapple.org

## **USApple Applauds Move of Stabenow to Agriculture Committee Chair**

*Michigan Senator is a Specialty Crop Leader, Tenacious Supporter of American Growers*

Washington, DC — The U.S. Apple Association (USApple) today applauded today's announcement by Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) that she will become chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, which convenes in January.

Stabenow's opportunity to chair follows the recent election defeat of current chair Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), and Senator Kent Conrad's (D-ND) decision earlier today to remain as chairman of the Senate Budget Committee as Congress prepares to write the next Farm Bill. Conrad also serves on the Senate Agricultural Committee.

"American apple growers are thrilled to have Senator Debbie Stabenow as the new chair of this very important Congressional committee," said USApple Chairwoman Julia Rothwell, a Michigan apple leader. "She is an outstanding leader and has demonstrated absolute dedication to family farming and the complex nature of agriculture.

"Senator Stabenow's ability to fight for farmers with genuine bipartisan support was critical to the passage of the historic 2008 Farm Bill, which was the first to recognize specialty crops, including apples. Her expertise and devotion will be even more essential as work begins on the next Farm Bill and other important legislation in areas such as food safety and child nutrition."

USApple, which is a founding member of the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, successfully lobbied with Stabenow to get important programs – such as the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, Fruit and Vegetable Program and the Market Access Program – and other priority initiatives into the 2008 Farm Bill.

Stabenow has an extensive and diverse agricultural background. She has served on the Michigan House and Senate, and U.S. House and Senate, Agricultural Committees, and led creation of major agricultural legislation in each. Over the years, she worked on various pieces of legislation relating to important agricultural concerns such as research, competitiveness

grants, trade assistance, and pest and disease issues. In addition, she has been integral in securing purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables for federal nutrition programs (e.g., National School Lunch Program and Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program).

USApple also applauded the announcement earlier today about another critical Senate committee. Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND) will continue as chair of the pivotal Senate Budget Committee.

“Senator Conrad’s deep agricultural roots will be valuable in budget decisions affecting America’s farms,” said Rothwell. “The announcements today are a win-win for American apple growers and all of agriculture.”