



Canadian Farmers Seek Ambitious Trade Deal with the EU

Ottawa, October 18, 2010 — As the fifth round of negotiations towards a Canada-EU free trade agreement begin in Ottawa, Canadian farmers congratulate negotiators on their progress to date and encourage them to continue working towards an ambitious and ground-breaking trade deal.

Canada and the EU launched negotiations towards a Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) in May 2009. Negotiations cover a wide range of trade in goods, services, technical barriers to trade, regulatory cooperation, intellectual property and many other areas, making this the broadest trade agreement Canada has ever negotiated.

“Opening the European market for Canadian agriculture and food products is critical,” says Stan Eby, Chairman of CAFTA. “Canada remains too reliant on the United States – our main trading partner - as a destination for our agriculture and food products. Canada currently exports over half its agriculture and food products to the U.S. while only 5% are destined to the EU.”

With a population of almost 500 million the EU offers significant trade potential for Canadian farmers and food processors. A joint Canada-EU economic study has estimated that the elimination of trade barriers (tariff and non-tariff) between Canada and the EU could increase bi-lateral agri-food trade by up to \$3 billion, more than doubling current trade and representing significant economic value and job creation for primary agricultural products and for value-added processed products as well.

“We recognize the commitment of Canada’s federal and provincial governments in pursuing these negotiations,” says Kathleen Sullivan, Executive Director of CAFTA. “A comprehensive trade deal with the EU has the potential to generate new trade opportunities for our key agriculture and food sectors including beef, pork and canola. Failure to achieve significant progress in these key areas would be a tremendous disappointment and a missed opportunity for Canada.”

Canada is a World Leader in Agriculture Trade. In 2008, Canada’s agriculture and food product exports totaled \$39 billion – close to 8% of the country’s total merchandise trade. Canada is also a major player on the international stage, ranking behind the EU, United States and Brazil as the world’s 4th largest agri-food exporter.

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About CAFTA

CAFTA is a coalition of national and regional organizations which support a more open and fair international trading environment for agriculture and agri-food. CAFTA’s members include producer organizations, processors, marketers and exporters from the major trade dependent sectors in Canada including beef, pork, grains, and oilseeds. Together, these sectors produce almost 80 per cent of Canada's agriculture and agri-food exports, conduct about \$40 billion in business annually and directly employ close to 500 thousand Canadians.

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