



CANADIAN AGRIFOOD TRADE ALLIANCE

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NEWS RELEASE

Political Leadership is Critical in Doha Round

Geneva, Friday July 29, 2005 - "The positions have all been re-stated, the technical analysis is done and the areas where decisions are required are clear. It's time now for real political leadership to make those hard decisions and move WTO negotiations forward," said Liam McCreery, President of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, at the conclusion of this week's WTO negotiations in Geneva.

"CAFTA is very disappointed that that no real progress was made in Geneva this week," said Mr. McCreery. "We had hoped to have a 'first approximation' a clear idea of what a final agreement might look like by now. Instead the hard work has been pushed into the fall, leaving a very short time to do a very big job."

CAFTA's President, accompanied by three members of CAFTA's Board of Directors, was in Geneva to advise Canada's negotiating team as they worked towards a first approximation, and to ensure that the views of CAFTA's membership are clearly understood by the negotiators of other WTO member countries. CAFTA's delegation had daily briefings with members of Canada's negotiating team; met with the Chairman of the agriculture negotiations Tim Groser; and with representatives of ten WTO member countries.

"In all of our meetings it was made very clear to us that there is a real need for serious political leadership in these negotiations if we are to get an agreement by the end of this year in Hong Kong," said Mr. McCreery. "Canada made a strong case for an ambitious agreement in its remarks to the Trade Negotiations Committee. We think that paves the way for Canada's Minister of International Trade, Jim Peterson, and our Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Andy Mitchell, to lead the charge towards an ambitious outcome that will open up markets and substantially reduce subsidies to allow Canada's farmers and food processors to compete on an even basis internationally."



CAFTA's members hope that negotiators will return to Geneva after the WTO's summer break with clear direction from their Ministers to work towards real and substantial improvements in market access; substantial reductions in trade distorting support; and the early elimination of all forms of export subsidies. "Our Ministers can help by taking a proactive and ambitious approach to the negotiations on market access and subsidies," said Mr. McCreery. "Canada's international market dependent farmers, and all of the industries built on their production, are relying on them."

Members of the CAFTA delegation in Geneva are:

Liam McCreery, President

Alanna Koch, CAFTA Director, Agricore United

Bob Broeska, CAFTA Director, Canadian Oilseed Processors

Tyler Bjornson, CAFTA Director, Canola Council of Canada

Cam Dahl, Government Relations and Policy, Agricore United

Patty Townsend, Executive Director, CAFTA

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The Canadian Agri-Food Trade represents producers, processors and exporters of agriculture and agri-food products, as well as suppliers of agricultural inputs. Accounting for over 80% of Canada's agriculture and food exports, and more than 60% of farm cash receipts, CAFTA's members are united in their dependence on trade, and in their need for a liberalized international trading environment.



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