



CANADIAN AGRI-FOOD TRADE ALLIANCE

Suite 308 151 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3
Tel: (613) 560-0500 Fax: (613) 236-3590
www.cafta.org email: office@cafta.org

NEWS RELEASE

CAFTA Urges Ministers to Go to Geneva

Ottawa: Wednesday May 3, 2006 – The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) is urging Canada's new Ministers of Trade and Agriculture and Agri-Food to begin work immediately to establish Canada as a voice for ambition in the World Trade Organization negotiations on Agriculture.

CAFTA representatives have just returned from Geneva, where they met with the Chair of the agriculture negotiations, Ambassador Crawford Falconer; with staff in the WTO Secretariat; and with members of the negotiating teams from many different WTO member countries. "The message from all of them was very clear," said a letter sent from Geneva to Canada's Ministers. "The risk of a failure in the Doha Round is very serious, and political leadership is urgently required to move the negotiations forward."

CAFTA appreciates the serious commitment that the new Canadian government has made to actively participate in the WTO negotiations to achieve an ambitious round for Canada. CAFTA's letter suggests that: "now is the time to set Canada up as an international leader towards an ambitious outcome."

Both Ministers are urged to participate in any "mini-ministerial" meeting around the WTO negotiations that may be linked to the upcoming OECD Ministers' meeting in Paris May 23 and 24. CAFTA suggests that the timing is right for Ministers to go to Geneva before the OECD meeting to introduce themselves to the Ambassadors in the permanent missions of WTO member countries; and to meet with WTO Director General Pascal Lamy and the chairs of the various negotiating groups.

Canada's negotiators are clearly recognized as the technical leaders in this round. When the negotiations intensify at the political level, CAFTA hopes and expects that our Ministers will be clearly recognized as the Canadian voices for ambition. According to the CAFTA letter to Ministers: "That recognition will be best established if you and the new government are introduced in Geneva now."

For Information:

Liam McCreery, President Cell (519) 532-0202
Patty Townsend, Executive Director Tel: (613) 560-0500

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.


Agricore United


Alberta Beef Producers


Alberta Pork


Canada Beef Export Federation


Canadian Canola Growers


Canadian Cattlemen's Assoc.


Canadian Meat Council


Canadian Oilseed Processors Assoc.


Canadian Sugar Institute


Canola Council of Canada


Cargill Limited


Food & Consumer Products Canada


Grain Growers of Canada


Malting Industry Assoc. of Canada


Sask. Pork


Sunterra Group



My Future is Global