



CAFTA applauds the Ministers' Commitment to Get the Deal Done

July 21, 2008 - The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), an alliance of farmers and processors who rely on the international markets and export over \$32 billion worth of agricultural products each year, applaud the commitment of our Minister of International Trade and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to do their utmost to obtain a favourable deal at the World Trade Organization Ministerial Meetings in Geneva and to stay until a deal gets done.

A trade deal represents an additional \$3 billion annually for farm families, money that is currently being lost by an industry segment already contributing \$7 billion a year to Canada's agricultural trade balance.

Much of Canada's agricultural industry depends on exports, and market access is vital. Stewart Gilroy, a farmer and Chairman of the Board of the Canola Council of Canada - a sector that alone creates 216,000 jobs, involves 50,000 farm operations and has an impact of \$14 billion on the Canadian economy - has stated that survival depends on market access and failure to reach a deal puts much at risk. "An aggressive pursuit of Canada's interests is hugely important to these workers and their families," he says.

What might seem to be small percentage differences in trade negotiations have huge implications for Canadian agriculture. A percentage change can mean export expansion of a quarter of a million tonnes of wheat and almost 20,000 tonnes of pork into the EU, with equally important export expansion potential for barley, beef and sugar, says Ross Ravelli, President of the Grain Growers of Canada. "A deal is vital"

At a meeting with industry stakeholders on Monday the Ministers confirmed that these are important objectives and said they were pleased to have this input from the CAFTA representatives in Geneva. Representatives from the beef, pork, sugar, grains and oilseeds industries will be meeting face to face with Ministers Ritz and Fortier on Tuesday morning in Geneva to reiterate the importance of a successful outcome to these negotiations, one that improves market access for the benefit of the Canadian economy.

To arrange an interview with the CAFTA delegation in Geneva, contact:
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