



Ministers Affirm Support For Trade Liberalization

July 22, 2008 – Geneva - Representatives from the Canadian beef, pork, sugar and grains and oilseeds sectors met face to face with Minister of International Trade Michael Fortier and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Gerry Ritz in Geneva this morning, where ministerial meetings are attempting to move forward a World Trade Organization trade agreement. The industry representatives pressed their case for Canada to diligently pursue an ambitious result from the trade negotiations, one that will expand quotas to their maximum and maximize tariff reductions.

The delegation from the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), which represents the interests of the over 90% of Canadian farmers and processors who rely on exports and market their products based on prices set in the international marketplace, was impressed with the attitude of the Ministers who clearly believe that trade liberalization is key to the present and future prosperity of Canada as a trading nation.

As Minister Fortier's spokesperson was quoted as saying yesterday, "Canada is strongly committed to the multilateral process and continues to press for an ambitious outcome to the Doha round. Canadian agricultural producers, manufacturers and services will benefit from the expanded access to global markets that an ambitious outcome from the Doha round will secure".

The members of CAFTA, those agricultural sectors with exports that currently provide Canada with a \$7 billion trade surplus, heartily endorse this Ministerial support for an ambitious result to these critical negotiations, ones that, if successful will provide substantial gains for Canada. These industry sectors are also impressed by the support of several provincial governments who today indicated their opinion that Canada must play a leadership role that is consistent with its status as a major trading nation and engage in the agriculture negotiations to secure the maximum benefit for our industry.

This endorsement is, however, based upon the Ministers' actions to obtain the most ambitious result possible and the negotiations will be followed with great vigilance. CAFTA will continue to monitor the negotiations and will be extremely vocal at any further reduction in ambition.

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