



No Deal Is a Bad Deal for Canadian Farmers

July 29, 2008 – Geneva Switzerland - The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) stated emphatically today that no new deal at the World Trade Organization (WTO) would be a bad deal for Canadian farmers.

Without a new agreement, the future competitiveness of Canada's agriculture industry is at stake. The current international trading market remains significantly distorted by a range of barriers – including restrictive tariffs, arbitrary limits on market access, domestic support programs and export subsidies. Combined with the weakened U.S. dollar, which puts an additional burden on all Canadian exporters, the pressure on Canadian agricultural exporters has never been higher. Over 92% (210,000) of Canadian farmers are directly dependent on export markets – they either export their products or sell them domestically at prices set by international marketplaces.

“Billions are at stake for export dependent agriculture,” says Darcy Davis, President of CAFTA. “To not get a new WTO agreement would mean tariffs can be raised and domestic supports increased to further distort international trade. Canada's trade-dependent agriculture sectors, by far the majority of our agriculture producers, need a new deal not just to increase our access to world markets, but to maintain what we've got. There is no status quo.”

CAFTA delegates remain in Geneva where international ministers of trade are attempting to hammer out an agreement on a package of compromise parameters for agricultural tariff and subsidy reductions. Failure to reach an agreement would mean failure for the Doha Round of WTO negotiations and the likelihood that no new WTO agreement would be reached for years.

For further information:

Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance Ottawa office 613-560-0500
Cindy McCreath 403-615-1526 cindy@mccreathenterprises.ca