

# Canadian agriculture and agri-food exporters back CETA – with conditions

February 15th, 2017

**Ottawa – February 15, 2017** – Canada’s agriculture and agri-food exporters welcome the positive result of the European Union vote to ratify the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) while asking the Canadian government to address important outstanding issues.

“Getting the CETA through the European Parliament is a tremendous step forward for the farm and food sector that is growing through exports – it’s good news for trade and speaks to the Canadian government’s efforts so far,” said Brian Innes, president of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA). “But we need to make sure that the agreement delivers on its promises. Non-tariff barriers will prevent a large part of the agri-food sector from using the agreement if they are not resolved.”

The agreement holds huge potential for growth and has been supported by CAFTA since negotiations began eight years ago. It will eliminate EU tariffs on 94 per cent of Canada’s agri-food products, and could drive additional exports of up to \$1.5 billion, including \$600 million in beef, \$400 million in pork, \$100 million in grains and oilseeds, \$100 million in sugar-containing products and a further \$300 million in processed foods, fruits and vegetables.

“We are encouraged that Canada is actively seeking out free trade agreements like CETA – as a trading nation, we must have competitive access to global markets,” Innes said. “CETA provides the opportunity to be ahead of our main competitors in the largest economy in the world.”

He added that the sticking points remaining – related to EU treatment of crop input products, such as biotechnology, and Canadian meat processing systems – are serious issues that need to be addressed before the agreement can deliver its potential.

In addition, CAFTA wants the government to commit to a strong advocacy strategy and a comprehensive implementation plan for agriculture and agri-food exporters that will deliver real access for Canadian companies once the trade doors are opened.

“CETA will be a significant boost for our economy, our companies and our communities, if the Canadian government gets the details and path forward right,” said Innes.

*CAFTA is a coalition of national and regional organizations that support a more open and fair international trading environment for Canada's agriculture and agrifood.*

*CAFTA's members include farmers, producers, processors, and exporters from the major trade dependent sectors, including beef, pork, grains, oilseed, sugar, and malt. Together, CAFTA members account for 90% of Canada's agriculture and agri-food exports, about \$54 billion in exports and an economic activity that supports 940,000 jobs across Canada.*

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