

# Canadian agriculture and agri-food exporters disappointed with WTO Nairobi Package

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**Ottawa, ON – December 23, 2015** – The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) is disappointed that the Doha negotiations have failed to substantially improve Canadian agriculture’s ability to compete in world markets. CAFTA is disappointed that the draft agriculture package adopted at the Tenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Nairobi, Kenya does not address market access and domestic support and remains far from the aspirations identified in the Doha Declaration.

“We are disappointed that the Doha negotiations have not significantly improved Canadian agriculture’s ability to compete in world markets,” says CAFTA President Brian Innes. “Free and fair trade is elusive because the negotiations have not reached a meaningful agreement to eliminate market access barriers and trade-distorting domestic support.”

Agriculture is one of the most important and sensitive issues on the WTO negotiating agenda yet it remains highly protected. Agriculture negotiations at the WTO have focused on three pillars—domestic support, market access, and export subsidies. The Nairobi agreement disciplines agricultural export competition with an outcome on the elimination of export subsidies, which would yield few, incremental benefits for Canadian agriculture and agri-food exporters. Negotiators failed to address the other two pillars where reform of trade distorting domestic support and multilateral improvements in market access. Free trade agreements such as the Canada European Union Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) are generally limited to market access negotiations and do not address disparities in domestic and export support that distort global markets – multilateral negotiations like the WTO are the only way to tackle all forms of trade distortions.

CAFTA supports agricultural negotiations at the WTO to achieve global and reciprocal gains in international trade with an integrated focus on the three pillars: market access, export competition and domestic support. CAFTA encourages WTO members to use the work done in Kenya as inspiration to immediately resume work on the broader Doha objectives.

“Liberalizing agri-food trade is not a simple task – but it’s essential for hundreds of thousands of farmers, processors and exporters across Canada,” says Innes. “A level playing field created by an ambitious Doha agreement would enable Canadian agri-food exports to bring the most value to Canada from international markets.”

*CAFTA is a coalition of national and regional organizations that support a more open and fair international trading environment for agriculture and agri-food. CAFTA’s members include producer organizations, processors, marketers and exporters from the major trade dependent sectors in Canada. Together, these sectors produce over 80 per cent of Canada’s agriculture and agri-food exports, about \$50 billion in exports annually. The economic activity created by CAFTA members supports hundreds of thousand jobs in agriculture and food manufacturing. A significant portion of these jobs would not exist without competitive access to world markets.*

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