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OTTAWA, (ON) June 20, 2014 – Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) salutes Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Gerry Ritz for leading a dynamic weeklong agricultural trade mission to China, which concluded today.

"Trade missions are vitally important to our members, many of whom export more than 70 per cent of their production," said CAFTA President Lisa Skierka. "The scale of this trade mission to China, from the size of the delegation to the ambitious schedule, demonstrated more than ever that Canadian agriculture is a committed trading partner."

From June 15 to 20, CAFTA members participated in the weeklong trade mission that included participation in the World Meat Congress, meetings with senior Chinese officials and a series of trade-related events in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

"The mission to China, led by Minister Ritz, has helped promote stable long-term trade between China and Canada," said Canada Council of Canada President Paul Miller. "With China accounting for \$2.6 billion in cattle purchases last year, this dialogue is very important to the entire Canadian beef chain."

China is an important trading partner for Canada now and in the future.

"Half of the world's pork production and consumption takes place in China and the demand for pork is expected to exceed production for the foreseeable future," stated Canadian Pork Council's Chair Jean-Guy Vincent. "This trade mission helps to ensure the Canadian pork industry plays a significant role in supplying Chinese demand for a safe, quality product."

The Canadian Meat Council shares the Canadian Pork Council's view of partners.

"China is expected to export approximately 1.3 million tonnes of beef, veal and pork meat during 2014," said Canadian Meat Council Executive Director Jim Lavin. "As our meat exports to China in 2013 totalled only 369 thousand tonnes, there is ample opportunity to increase Canada's future market share significantly."

Beef producers are grateful for the opportunity to participate in the trade mission to China.

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and a series of trade-related events in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

“The mission to China, led by Minister Ritz, has helped promote stable long-term trade between China and Canada,” said Canola Council of Canada President Patti Miller. “With China accounting for \$2.8 billion in canola purchases last year, this dialogue is very important to the entire canola value chain.”

China is an important trading partner for Canada now and in the future.

“Half of the world’s pork production and consumption takes place in China and the demand for pork is expected to exceed production for the foreseeable future,” stated Canadian Pork Council’s Chair Jean-Guy Vincent. “This trade mission helps to ensure the Canadian pork industry plays a significant role in supplying Chinese demand for a safe, quality product.” The Canadian Meat Council shares the Canadian Pork Council’s sense of optimism.

“China is expected to import approximately 1.3 million tonnes of beef, veal and pork meat during 2014,” said Canadian Meat Council Executive Director Jim Laws. “As our meat exports to China in 2013 totalled only 169 thousand tonnes, there is ample opportunity to increase Canada’s future market share significantly.”

Beef producers are grateful for the opportunity to participate in the trade mission to China.

“Canada’s beef cattle producers appreciate the commitment shown by Minister Ritz to ensure the staged progress toward full market access remains on track,” said Canadian Cattlemen’s Association President Dave Solverson. “On its own, China holds huge potential for Canada’s beef cattle producers. When combined with other trade agreements the Government of Canada has reached, particularly with Europe and Korea, producers have a bright future shaping up in front of them for the long-term.”

CAFTA members are proud to promote Canadian agriculture and agri-food products.

China’s fast growing demand for quality agricultural agri-food products is aligned with Canada’s agricultural capabilities.

“China is very open to trade opportunities with Canada,” said Barley Council of Canada Executive Director Brett Campbell. “The BCC is committed to capitalizing on this market, and working with the other CAFTA members to provide a strong voice for quality Canadian agri-food products.”