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**No. 22**

## **Legislation for Canada's Free Trade Agreement with EFTA Countries Tabled in Parliament**

The Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, today tabled in Parliament legislation to implement Canada's free trade agreement with the states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)—Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

The agreement includes the elimination or reduction of tariffs on selected Canadian agricultural and agri-food products such as durum wheat, frozen french fries, beer and Canadian crude canola oil.

"Trade matters to Canada's prosperity," said Minister Day. "Free trade is more important than ever. At a time of economic uncertainty, our government is committed to seeking new opportunities to promote prosperity and long-term growth for all Canadians. This agreement is expected to bring solid economic opportunities for Canadian exporters and importers by enhancing their access to the wealthy and sophisticated EFTA markets."

The Canada-EFTA Free Trade Agreement was signed on January 26, 2008, and is expected to come into force by July 1, 2009.

This free trade agreement is Canada's first such agreement with European countries. It will provide a strategic platform for Canadian companies to tap into value chains both directly in the EFTA countries and indirectly in the European Union. Exporters will benefit through the reduction or elimination of tariffs, while importers will enjoy more affordable access to goods from EFTA countries.

The Government of Canada held extensive consultations with stakeholders throughout the negotiation of this agreement to ensure that their interests and concerns were taken into account.

The agreement is part of Canada's Global Commerce Strategy, which aims to advance Canada's commercial interests in key markets through an ambitious free trade agenda. For more information on the strategy, please visit:  
[www.international.gc.ca/commerce/strategy-strategie/index.aspx?lang=en](http://www.international.gc.ca/commerce/strategy-strategie/index.aspx?lang=en).