



Canada's Farmers and Food Processors Support Trade

Ottawa, April 27, 2012 — Today, Canada's agri-food leaders participated in events across the country to promote the importance of trade to Canada's farmers and food processors.

On April 27, the Canadian government held events in 18 cities across the country to promote the importance of trade to the Canadian economy and to raise awareness of negotiations towards a free trade deal between Canada and the European Union (EU). Fifty agri-food leaders participated in these events to demonstrate the importance of trade and the need for Canada to continue negotiating trade deals that support Canada's agri-food sectors.

"Trade is critical to the viability and vitality of Canada's agriculture and food sectors," said CAFTA President and Grain Growers of Canada Executive Director Richard Phillips from Regina. "In Canada we export \$40 billion a year in agriculture and food products. Without trade the size, shape and stability of Canada's agri-food sectors would change for the worse."

Canada's federal government has put in place the most ambitious trade agenda the country has ever seen including the possibility of trade deals with lucrative markets including the EU, South Korea, Japan, India and the Trans Pacific Partnership. "These deals, combined, could increase agriculture exports significantly," said CAFTA Executive Director Kathleen Sullivan. "Missing out on these deals could have devastating consequences for agriculture in this country."

"I am thrilled to be part of these important events," said CAFTA Vice President and Canadian Canola Growers Association General Manager Rick White from Winnipeg. "Given the importance of trade to our sector it is critical that Canada act aggressively and uncompromisingly to pursue its export interests around the globe. A successful deal with the EU could signal to the world that Canada is serious and open for trade."

Canada currently exports half of its agriculture and food products including 50% of its beef production, 65% of its malt, two-thirds of its pork, almost 75% of its wheat and 85% of its canola. CAFTA members represent 80% of Canada's agri-food exports.

"As an industry, we are particularly enthusiastic about the Canada-EU negotiations," said Sullivan. "The EU is already an important trading partner for Canada. But these negotiations have the potential to expand trade significantly, particularly in areas like beef, pork, canola and processed foods – some of our most important agri-food exports."

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About CAFTA

CAFTA is a coalition of national and regional organizations which 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 almost 80% of Canada's agriculture and agri-food exports, conduct about \$40 billion in business annually and directly employ close to 500,000 Canadians.

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