



Canadian Cattlemen's Association

News Release

Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Federal Minister Meet on BSE Issues

June 15, 2004

Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) President Stan Eby met with the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Bob Speller yesterday to discuss issues arising from the Beef Value Chain Roundtable held in Calgary last week. Also in attendance at yesterday's meeting were CCA Director Betty Green, Canada Beef Export Federation Chair Ben Thorlakson, and Manitoba Cattle Producers Association Director Shirley Conibear.

The Roundtable is an industry-government steering group established to develop joint strategies for market success in the beef sector. At last week's meeting the Roundtable discussed contingency plans for the beef industry in the event of a prolonged border closure to live cattle and other issues. The Roundtable concluded depressed prices for Canadian cattle are due to a lack of processing capacity in Canada for all of the cattle coming to market and that expanding slaughter capacity is the biggest factor that can favourably influence cattle prices in the short term. Evaluation of other interventions such as inventory management and set aside programs is also continuing. (For more information arising from the Roundtable meeting see news release *Beef Industry Roundtable Determines Contingency Plans* on CCA website www.cattle.ca).

"We were encouraged by the Federal Government's commitment to investigate all potential options that will assist the industry through this crisis," says Eby. "We were also reassured that Minister Speller's top priority remains the reopening of the border."

Minister Speller ended the meeting by saying, "I acknowledge the growing frustration experienced by the livestock sector as a result of the economic losses and uncertainty they are facing. I was encouraged by the positive and productive discussions that we had today."

"The Government of Canada remains committed to make every effort to impress on the U.S. administration that this remains a high priority. I am also encouraged that efforts directed to live animal trade in markets other than the U.S. are moving in a positive direction."

For further information:

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CCA is the National Voice for the Beef Cattle Industry, representing over 90,000 Cattle Producers