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Traceability

The federal and provincial governments are continuing their consultations looking to develop a National Agriculture and Agri-Food Traceability System (NAFTS). This system is intended to be built upon a partnership between government and industry, and the CCA and the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) have been participating in these discussions.

The Canadian beef industry implemented the national identification system for beef cattle in January 2001. The CCIA system currently incorporates the three key pillars of traceability:

- individual animal identification,
- premises identification, and
- animal tracking.

In addition, it currently provides multi-species services to the beef, dairy, bison and sheep industries. It operates within the Federal Health of Animals Act, and provides direct access to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. This provides the capacity for a rapid response in the case of an animal health or food safety problem, as has been demonstrated through the BSE crisis. The CCIA identification system increases the efficiency of a trace back by 90% and helps ensure the rapid containment and elimination of potentially devastating reportable diseases and major food safety problems, as well as any unforeseen new problems that may arise.

It is important that the Canadian beef industry remains committed to meet the domestic and international animal health and food safety requirements. We continue to improve our animal health emergency response capabilities. While discussions are continuing, we are hopeful that the government will take the system that has already been developed and continue to work with the beef cattle industry to expand the services that this system can provide.

Disaster Program and Production Insurance

The Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers have also tasked their staff with developing production insurance and a disaster program. The most complicating part of the process is undertaking to design a Disaster Program and Production Insurance at the same time. The CCA has been lobbying for the development of a disaster program, and it is necessary to ensure that it is well designed and implemented. While the CCA is not opposed to the development of production insurance, we would like to see the priority placed on fully developing and implementing the disaster program first.

Canadian Cattlemen Request Trade Action Against South Korea

Most of Canada's significant beef and cattle markets prior to May 2003 have either already reinstated market access or are in advanced stages of their domestic processes aimed at restoring normal access.

This encouraging situation is due in large part to the joint efforts of government and industry to implement and practice strong BSE controls and surveillance measures and to communicate that there is no justifiable reason for any country to maintain BSE trade restrictions on Canadian beef or cattle.

Unfortunately the Republic of Korea remains a notable exception to this progress. In 2002, Korea was Canada's fourth largest export market for beef, purchasing some \$50 million of product. The Canada-Korea trade relationship is overwhelmingly in Korea's favour. Over the past five years, Canada's average purchases from Korea are \$5.2 billion per year and our average exports are \$2.2 billion per year.

The CCA has requested that Canada suspend free trade negotiations with Korea until beef trade is resumed. We have also formally requested the Government to initiate dispute settlement mechanisms with Korea under the WTO. The objective of such action must be the full restoration of access for all Canadian beef and live cattle.

New Communications Manager

We are pleased to announce that Theresa Keddy has joined the CCA as the new Communications Manager. Theresa comes to the CCA with a degree in Public Relations from Mount Saint Vincent University and was most recently working with the Canadian Angus Association. Theresa began her new role at the beginning of September and is available by contacting the CCA's Calgary office.