



Canadian Cattlemen's Association

News Release

Federal government moves WTO Trade dispute forward on South Korea

September 1, 2009

Calgary, AB – Canadian cattle producers applauded the Government of Canada for their continuing pursuit to restore trade in Canadian beef with South Korea, when the World Trade Organization (WTO) announced yesterday that a trade dispute settlement panel would be established. After initial consultations with South Korea yielded no movement on its unjustified refusal to resume trade, the Canadian government made two subsequent requests to the WTO Dispute Settlement Body, to move forward with the next phase aimed at restoring trade.

Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) president, Brad Wildeman spoke on behalf of cattle producers across Canada saying that the federal government's determination to overcome this ongoing, unjustifiable border closure is encouraging. "I commend federal Minister of International Trade and the Asia-Pacific Gateway, Stockwell Day, and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, Gerry Ritz, for seeking the WTO dispute settlement panel. Canadian beef meets all the requirements for full market access, according to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), so there is absolutely no reason for Korea's continued refusal to restore Canada's access."

Wildeman recalls that there have been extensive technical discussions with South Korea, in which Canada has provided more than ample scientific evidence to justify full resumption of trade, yet Korea remains unwilling to move on their unfair border closure. "It's mystifying as to why South Korea continues their ban when the international scientific community accepts Canadian beef is safe. There simply are no grounds for their continued border closure – especially when they accept United States beef, which shares the same OIE status as our Canadian products."

During this next phase of the WTO challenge, a trade dispute settlement panel will assess whether South Korea's measures are consistent with its international trade obligations under the WTO. To date, more than 50 countries have resumed trade in Canadian beef, based in whole or in part on the OIE guidelines for Controlled BSE Risk. Along with the OIE, they recognize the effectiveness of Canada's world-leading measures for the mitigation, surveillance and eradication of BSE.

For more information on this issue, including other major trade initiatives recently undertaken by Canada's beef cattle industry and the Canadian government, please visit the CCA website at www.cattle.ca.

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For further information, contact:

Sharon Jensen
Communications Manager
Canadian Cattlemen's Association
403-275-8558, ext. 406, or jensens@cattle.ca