



Canadian Cattlemen's Association

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Colombia accepts Canadian beef of all ages

September 18, 2009

Calgary, AB – The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) applauds the Government of Canada's announcement that Colombia will restore full access for Canadian beef from cattle of all ages. This announcement builds on Colombia's decision, in May 2009, to partially re-open its border to Canadian beef. CCA is very pleased that Colombia has taken this further decision toward fully restoring Canada's beef access.

The Colombian market is estimated to be worth approximately \$6 million for Canadian beef products, plus \$1 million for Canadian livestock and genetics exports. According to the Federal Government, exports will resume once valid certificates are agreed with the Colombian government.

In May 2007, the OIE officially categorized Canada as a "controlled risk" for BSE due to our effective BSE surveillance, mitigation and eradication measures. The "controlled risk" status allows for the safe trade in all beef and cattle under certain conditions which Canada has met. The announcement by Colombia means that 14 countries, plus 27 member-countries of the European Union, have fully recognized Canada as a controlled-risk country and removed their BSE restrictions on Canadian beef. CCA believes that momentum is growing and looks forward to additional countries following the leadership demonstrated by Colombia and these other trading partners.

The remaining piece of the puzzle will be implementing the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Canadian parliament is currently debating Bill C-23 to implement this agreement. The CCA supports the speedy enactment of Bill C-23. Colombia's 80-per-cent tariff on Canadian beef has been a formidable barrier to accessing that market in the past. The Canada-Colombia FTA will immediately provide duty-free access for up to 5,250 tonnes of Canadian beef and offals. The remaining tariff will be eliminated over a 12-year period. With the FTA in place, the potential for Canadian beef exports to Colombia could more than triple, annually exceeding \$20 million.

For more information on the Colombian trade agreement, other major trade initiatives, plus the export-market-access strategy laid out in the "Enhanced Market Access Recommendations", recently undertaken by Canada's beef cattle industry and the Government of Canada, please visit our website at www.cattle.ca.

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**For voice clips by CCA vice-chairman and International Trade Committee chairman
Travis Toews, please refer to the following page**

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Clip No. 1:

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) applauds the Government of Canada's announcement that Columbia will restore full access to Canadian beef cattle from all ages. Travis Toews, CCA vice-chairman and chair of the Foreign Trade Committee, says the momentum to expand trade continues:

(10... "industry.")

Clip No. 2:

Toews says he is looking forward to the implementation of the free trade agreement between Canada and Columbia:

(13... "triple.")

Clip No. 3:

"We're very pleased that Federal Ministers Gerry Ritz and Stockwell Day continue to make beef access an important issue," adds Toews:

(23... "income.")

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National Voice of Canada's Beef Cattle Industry representing 90,000 Canadian Producers

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