



Canadian Cattlemen's Association

News Release

CCA congratulates leaders for progress made during Asia mission

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Calgary, AB – The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is encouraged with news of the progress made during Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Gerry Ritz's Asian trade mission. Throughout the mission, which visited several major Asian markets including China, Hong Kong and Korea, the key focus was agriculture. CCA President Brad Wildeman was pleased to participate in the mission to provide support and expertise to the Prime Minister and Minister Ritz.

"The CCA is pleased that the Ministers chose to focus on agriculture as it indicates their understanding of what Canada's beef cattle industry needs to survive these tough times," explains Brad Wildeman. "It is critical that we establish greater access into our top export markets in Asian countries."

Korea – Both Prime Minister Harper and Minister Ritz expressed our concerns to their counterparts about the prolonged lack of access for Canadian beef into Korea. The result of the firm stance taken by Canada is that Korea now appears to be looking for a solution.

CCA believes that Canada must continue its World Trade Organization (WTO) Dispute Settlement Panel against Korea until commercially meaningful access for beef occurs. The formal WTO process commenced last spring and the Panel was established in the fall. "We received promises in the past that South Korea would resume imports from Canada," says Wildeman, "but they never materialized. So while we always look for another solution, we must continue to assert our rights under WTO for a dispute settlement".

China - While further progress for beef was not achieved, discussions were held. Notable access was established for Canadian pork and canola exports. The re-establishment of export access for Canadian pork should help to improve the domestic Canadian market for all proteins, and is therefore positive news for Canadian beef producers.

Hong Kong - Perhaps the most positive development was the Prime Minister's announcement that Hong Kong will re-establish full access for Canadian beef. In early 2009, Minister Ritz travelled to Hong Kong and reached an agreement on a phased approach for Hong Kong to expand imports of Canadian beef. That agreement was to culminate this month with near full access (excluding certain bone-in products). However, due to the positive performance of Canadian beef exporters over the past year and the resulting confidence of Hong Kong authorities, the Prime Minister's mission provided the opportunity to "trade up" to virtually full beef access according to OIE (World Animal Health Organization) standards.

Hearty congratulations to Prime Minister Harper and Minister Ritz for their hard work on these missions and the positive results. These results demonstrate the value of having our political leaders travel to our trading partners to go to bat on our behalf. The CCA is very supportive of these activities and will continue to be in the future..

For further information on the Asian markets and the CCA's continued work to establish commercially meaningful access, visit www.cattle.ca.

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