



Canadian Cattlemen's Association

## News Release

October 9, 2003

### **Canadian Cattlemen's Association Demands Federal Government Commit to Harmonizing Animal Health Policies**

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA), supported by industry stakeholders and a number of Provincial Governments, has formally requested that the Government of Canada make a commitment to changing how the livestock diseases Bluetongue and Bovine Anaplasmosis are dealt with in Canada and implement policies more compatible with the United States.

Currently both Bluetongue and Bovine Anaplasmosis are on the Reportable Disease list in Canada, which is usually reserved for highly contagious diseases and those which pose a potential risk for humans. Neither of the diseases is contagious, nor do either of these diseases pose any risk to humans. The CCA has requested that both diseases be placed on the annual notifiable list, as they are in the U.S., and which provides for the industry to take responsibility for managing the risk.

"Bluetongue in particular has been a trade irritant on both sides of the border for longer than I care to remember," says CCA President Neil Jahnke. "It's a bit hypocritical for Canada to promote the idea of the North American beef industry and then continue to use outdated policy and regulations to avoid an acceptable level of risk."

"We have reviewed the risk assessments conducted by Government and have consulted with world renowned experts on risk assessment and the diseases themselves," states CCA Animal Health and Meat Inspection Committee Chairman Arno Doerksen. "It comes down to the industry accepting what is a negligible risk for Bluetongue and a manageable risk for Anaplasmosis in the same manner that the U.S. deals with them. Northern tier States, with the same climatic conditions as Canada, do not consider these livestock diseases to be a threat."

Enhancing the concept of the North American beef industry, a concept supported by the Federal Government, is a key strategic priority for the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA). One of the cornerstones of the strategy is the harmonization of animal health import/export policies with the United States and Mexico.

The CCA is committed to pursuing this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

**For further information:**

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