



Investment in Market Access Vital to the Future of Canada's Livestock Industry

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Calgary, AB – Re-opening foreign markets to Canada's export-dependent livestock industry could take a major step forward if the federal government adopts the roadmap for agricultural market access developed by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and seven industry partners. The strategy focuses on enhancing Canada's market access negotiating capabilities to restore and secure economically-meaningful access to foreign markets lost to BSE.

CCA President Brad Wildeman says, "Only two of our top ten markets in 2002, pre-BSE, have fully lifted market restrictions, despite the fact that the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines clearly state full trade in all beef products should resume provided that specified risk materials are removed. It's obvious that the Canadian government must take a more aggressive, leadership role to restore full access to these countries. Clearly, limits on our current negotiating capacity have impeded progress and yielded few results. That's why we partnered with the Canada Beef Export Federation, Canada Pork International, Canadian Beef Breeds Council, Canadian Livestock Genetics Association, Canadian Meat Council and the Canadian Pork Council to create this market access approach that would position Canada as a world leader. We are calling for the establishment of a Senior Trade Secretariat to co-ordinate this comprehensive trade initiative. We have also asked the Prime Minister to appoint a full-time Beef Envoy dedicated to negotiating market access."

Wildeman continued to say, "Canada is the world's largest exporter of high-quality, grain-fed beef and trade is vitally important to our future. Closed markets have cost Canadians billions of dollars since 2003, plus thousands of jobs in the meat industry". He says that if the Canadian government institutes this roadmap, by 2015 it could result in up to \$6.3 billion in additional exports and create 93,000 jobs, annually contributing \$300 million in federal tax revenue and \$3 billion of labour income.

Wildeman continued, "We are confident we produce the best beef in the world and the Canadian government needs to promote the science-based credibility of Canada's food safety systems to the fullest extent at an international level. At the same time it needs to hold other countries to the same "rule of thumb" applied to our Canadian exports. We now provided the federal government with a roadmap that contains 25 major recommendations. We already supplied the vehicles with the only national field-to-market cattle identification system, in North America, and a comprehensive branding strategy - the Canadian Beef Advantage. The Canadian Government needs to open the doors for us and clearly more resources and greater coordination is needed to get that job done."

For information on the proposed agricultural market access strategy, visit our website at www.cattle.ca.

-30-

For further information, contact:

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