



Export market access initiatives open new opportunities for producers

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Calgary, AB – The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) applauds the federal government for their aggressive leadership approach to improve export-market access opportunities. The Government of Canada announced today that it will implement several key industry recommendations developed by CCA and its seven industry partners.

CCA President Brad Wildeman says, "Opening international markets for our industry is essential to our industry's long-term survival and it's our top priority. We welcome the news that the federal government is creating the new export market-access secretariat to work full-time on aggressively and strategically pursuing international markets. This move could significantly improve the bottom line for Canadian producers, resulting in as much as \$100 per head increase. With the co-ordinating efforts of the secretariat's trade experts, industry and government trade initiatives will work cohesively to promote agricultural exports worldwide and work to effectively eliminate any technical barriers to Canadian exports."

CCA Foreign Trade Chair, Travis Toews, says that Canada is the world's largest exporter of high-quality, grain-fed beef and trade is vitally important to our industry's future. "Closed markets have cost Canadians billions of dollars since 2003, plus thousands of jobs in the meat industry. These first steps will begin to open doors. If our full recommendations are adopted, by 2015 it could result in up to \$6.3 billion in additional exports and employ up to 93,000 Canadians, annually contributing \$300 million in federal tax revenue and \$3 billion of labour income."

Only two of Canada's top ten markets, pre-BSE, have fully lifted market restrictions, despite the fact that the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines clearly states full trade in all beef products should resume provided that specified risk materials are removed. The comprehensive 25-point strategy, presented to the federal government at the fall meeting of the Beef Value Chain Roundtable (BVCRT), focuses on enhancing Canada's market access negotiating capabilities to restore and secure economically-meaningful access to foreign markets lost to BSE.

Wildeman added, "We are confident Canada produces the best beef in the world. This strategic move by our federal government will fully promote the science-based credibility of Canada's food safety systems internationally. It will also hold other countries accountable to the same "rule of thumb" applied to our Canadian exports. In conjunction with our exclusive, national field-to-market cattle identification system – the only one in North America, plus our new comprehensive branding strategy - the Canadian Beef Advantage, the Canadian Government is equipped to open the doors for us internationally."

For information on the proposed agricultural market access strategy, presented by the CCA and its partners at the BVRCT meeting, as well as link to the federal government's announcement, visit our website at www.cattle.ca.

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