

Statement by Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance on Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Talks

OTTAWA (ON) – AUGUST 25, 2014 – On news that Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) chief negotiators will meet Sept 1-10 in Hanoi to continue trade liberalization negotiations, Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) President Lisa Skierka today issued the following statement on the status of the TPP trade talks:

“The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) continues to advocate for an ambitious outcome from all countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) negotiations.

CAFTA shares the view that the TPP can set a new standard for trade agreements that will boost trade, strengthen economic growth and create jobs throughout the Asia-Pacific region – one of Canada’s priority export markets. The TPP’s true potential is its ability to become a precedent setting agreement that facilitates trade and the development of supply chains across the region.

For the TPP to live up to its promise, all member countries must maintain their commitment to a high standard, comprehensive agreement. As such, CAFTA urges all countries involved without exception to strive for the same high standards.

Reports of countries not willing to engage in substantive liberalization would send worrisome signals about their commitments to an ambitious TPP agreement.

CAFTA members support comprehensive market access opportunities for Canadian agriculture and agri-food by eliminating tariff and non-tariff barriers on all products. Exceptions for sensitive products would jeopardize the objective of achieving that outcome.

Our members believe that agricultural and agri-food market access schedules within the TPP deal should be plurilateral. The benefit of the TPP for Canadians is if all members receive the same tariff phase out period and reduction in tariffs for each tariff line. Without this, the TPP could actually reduce the competitiveness of Canadian exporters if some TPP members provide greater market access to some countries than others.

CAFTA calls on all TPP countries to lead the path to economic liberalization in the region and be champions of free trade in the Trans-Pacific region.

Only with comprehensive outcomes will the full promise of the TPP be achieved, bringing maximum trade benefit to Canadians and the Canadian economy.”

Quick Facts:

- Canada’s agriculture sector exported over \$50 billion in 2013. TPP member countries represent 64% of Canada’s agri-food exports.
- TPP offers hope of important new export opportunities to TPP member countries if all countries, including Canada, strive for a comprehensive, high quality agreement that enhances trade for all products in the region.
- Increasing export of Canadian agriculture and agri-food products is critical to the prosperity of the close to 500,000 Canadians we directly employ.

CAFTA is a coalition of national and regional organizations that support a more open and fair international trading environment for agriculture and agri-food. CAFTA’s members include producer organizations, processors, marketers and exporters from the major trade dependent sectors in Canada. Together, these sectors produce almost 80 per cent of Canada’s agriculture and agri-food exports, conduct about \$40 billion in business annually and directly employ close to 500,000 Canadians.

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