

# Canadian agriculture and agri-food exporters applaud signing of CETA

October 30th, 2016

**Brussels, Belgium – October 30, 2016** – The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) applauds the Government of Canada for signing the historic Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union (EU) today.

In an official ceremony, Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau, President of the European Council Donald Tusk, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and Slovak Prime Minister, Robert Fico for the Slovakia's Presidency of the Council of the EU signed the CETA deal today, after seven years of negotiations. The official signing means the complete text may begin the ratification process through the Canadian Parliament and the legislatures of the 28 member countries of the EU and cannot be amended.

“Seeing Canada’s largest trade agreement since NAFTA get signed is a bright light for agri-food exporters,” said Brian Innes, CAFTA president. “Better access to the EU will help us grow our exports, driving growth here in Canada.”

Eliminating barriers to trade through the CETA will allow Canada to capture more value from agri-food exports to the EU. Canada exported C\$2.6 billion in agriculture and food products to the EU in 2014. When the CETA is fully implemented, it will eliminate EU tariffs on almost 94 per cent of Canada’s agri-food products. The agreement could drive additional exports of up to C\$1.5 billion, including \$600 million in beef, \$400 million in pork, \$100 million in grains and oilseeds, \$100 million in sugar containing products and a further \$300 million in processed foods, fruits and vegetables.

Over the last 10 years in Canada, agriculture and agrifood exports have grown by 103%, from \$30 billion to over \$61 billion – boosting farm cash receipts by 61% over the same 2005-2015 period.

“We believe free trade deals like CETA are required for Canada’s export oriented agri-food sector to thrive,” says Innes. “CETA provides the framework to access one of the world’s few multibillion-dollar export markets, and importantly, it does so ahead of our major competitors.”

One remaining concern is the slow progress the EU is making to resolve technical issues that will allow agri-food exporters to have commercially viable access to the EU. CAFTA

encourages government officials to resolve outstanding technical issues while the necessary legal and political processes are completed.

CAFTA Executive Director Claire Citeau was present for the signing ceremony and was accompanied earlier this week in Brussels by Doug Sawyer of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

CAFTA and its members have attended multiple rounds of negotiations and look forward to working closely with government officials on successfully implementing this deal so that commercially viable access is achieved.

Canada's export oriented agri-food sector includes 90% of farmers who depend on world markets, as well as food processors and the over 300,000 Canadian jobs directly and indirectly supported by agri-food exports<sup>[1]</sup>.

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**For further information:**

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*CAFTA is a coalition of national and regional organizations that support a more open and fair international trading environment for agriculture and agri-food. Our members represent farmers, producers, processors and exporters from the major trade dependent sectors including; beef, pork, grains, oilseed, pulse, soy, malt and sugar sectors. Together, we account for 90% of Canada's agriculture and agri-food exports, about \$50 billion in exports and an economic activity that supports directly and indirectly 940,000 jobs across Canada.*

<sup>[1]</sup> Assessment of the economic contribution of agricultural and agrifood exports to the Canadian Economy- July 2016. [www.cafta.org](http://www.cafta.org)