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Canadian Agri-Food
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Chilean TPP trade talks encouraging for Canadian agri-food sector

Ottawa - March 17, 2017- The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) is encouraged by the support for free trade coming from this week's meeting of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Ministers.

The discussions showed a willingness to continue breaking down trade barriers in the region while building up the free flow of goods among countries. The fact that Ministers shared views on advancing economic integration in the Asia-Pacific sends a positive signal to the world that keeping borders open is better than closing them down.

Importantly, it also shows the Ministers' desire to build on the years of negotiations that went into the TPP, and their willingness to preserve the positive outcomes of the deal.

We are particularly pleased that Canadian International Trade Minister François-Philippe Champagne reaffirmed his commitment to keeping markets open in the burgeoning economies of the region, markets that will support growth and jobs in Canada.

Nowhere are these opportunities more important than in the agriculture and agri-food sector. Better access to international markets through trade agreements has helped us grow agriculture and agri-food exports by 103 per cent to more than \$56 billion over the last ten years.

Today, 90 per cent of farmers depend on export markets and more than half of everything we produce goes beyond our borders. Ultimately, it's not only Canadian farmers and producers who benefit, but also hundreds of thousands of workers and small and medium sized businesses in rural and urban communities across Canada.

We need to maintain the momentum of the Chilean talks to have competitive access to Asian markets – especially in Japan, China, Vietnam and Malaysia. Other countries already have or are landing trade deals in the region, and we don't want to be left on the sidelines.

We encourage TPP Ministers to build on the goodwill generated so far, and forge a path forward using the TPP principles and high standards as a framework for a deal. We encourage the Canadian government and our negotiators to continue their efforts to open up new market opportunities in Asia.

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, sugar, pulse, soy and malt sectors. Together, we account for 90% of Canada's agriculture and agri-food exports, about \$54 billion in exports and an economic activity that support 940,000 jobs.

Contact:

Claire Citeau
Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA)
613-560-0500 / 613-266-9104
cciteau@cafta.org