

Securing the promise of CETA crucial to economic recovery, say Canada's agri-food exporters

October 29, 2020– *Dan Darling, President of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) today issued the following statement as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau met with EU leaders and the Honourable Mary Ng, Canada's Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade met with Valdis Dombrovskis, the new EU Commissioner for Trade.*

"We are pleased to see leaders from Canada and the EU champion the benefits of free trade and affirm their determination to further facilitate and promote the implementation of CETA, and as an important tool in strengthening the post-COVID economic recovery.

"While not directly mentioned in the [joint statement](#) issued by Canadian and EU leaders, we understand that both Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Ng continue to raise issues related to the need to remove technical barriers to agri-food trade with their EU counterparts.

"The persistence of these barriers three years after CETA has been in force remains frustrating for Canada's export-oriented agri-food sector. To date, Canada's exports to the EU are far below what was promised precisely because these barriers are impeding trade.

"Recognizing that issues exist is the best way to start resolving these challenges. We must then turn words into action. To that end, political leaders on both sides should issue very clear direction to officials and technical experts on both sides to resolve these issues without delay.

"Canada's agri-food sector can help drive Canada's economic recovery forward. However, for us to do so, we must ensure our trade agreements are implemented and enforced effectively.

"We welcome the pledge by leaders to work together to protect and strengthen the multilateral rules-based trading system and applaud the leadership of Minister Ng to intensify efforts to reform the World Trade Organization (WTO) at a time of unprecedented crisis and rampant protectionism.

"We will continue to work alongside the federal government in support of free and open trade and toward WTO modernization efforts that bring predictability, stability and enforcement back in the global trading system."

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CAFTA is the voice of Canadian agriculture and agri-food exporters, representing the 90% of farmers who depend on trade and the ranchers, producers, processors and agri-food exporters who want to grow the economy through better access to international markets. This includes the beef, pork, meat, grains, cereals, pulses, soybeans, canola as well as the sugar, malt, and processed food industries. The sectors CAFTA represents 90 per cent of Canada's agri-food exports and support over a million jobs in urban and rural communities across Canada.

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