

## **Agri-Food Exporters Support Launch of Exploratory Talks with Indonesia as Gateway to ASEAN Pact**

**February 25, 2021**

*Dan Darling, President of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) today issued the following statement regarding the potential launch of exploratory trade talks between Canada and Indonesia. This week, CAFTA [submitted](#) to the formal Canada Gazette consultations process regarding a possible Canada-Indonesia trade deal.*

“The launch of talks with Indonesia is a major step forward for Canada’s much-needed trade diversification efforts. With trade poised to play a pivotal role in global economic recovery, now is the time for Canada to continue to intensify its pursuit of opening new markets for exporters. We are pleased to offer recommendations on how best to advance Canada’s post-pandemic trade agenda so that trade can be a key driver of our economic recovery.

“Our members have been long-standing supporters of the need to make greater inroads throughout the dynamic and fast-growing Asia Pacific region. That is why we hope these talks can help serve as a building block toward a Canada-ASEAN agreement which we believe should be Canada’s top priority in Southeast Asia.

“Indonesia is ASEAN’s largest and most populous economy and Canada’s largest agriculture and agri-food export market in ASEAN. It represents about 35% of the region’s GDP and is also one of the fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia.

“Therefore, Indonesia can play a key role in working with other ASEAN countries to engage in comprehensive trade talks with Canada.

“Securing preferential access to Southeast Asian markets, including Indonesia, will be an important way for Canada to keep pace in a region where our competitors such as the U.S., Australia and Europe are moving aggressively to maintain an edge.

“Through CPTPP expansion, talks with ASEAN and now direct bilateral discussions with Indonesia, it is vital that a trade-reliant country like Canada continue to grow its free trade network around the world.

“We will continue to urge the federal government to push forward in securing a deal with ASEAN as well as advance a comprehensive and ambitious trade diversification agenda.”

“We look forward to working with officials to help ensure trade powers Canada’s economic recovery, and help create the jobs and growth of the future.”

*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 support over a million jobs in urban and rural communities across Canada.*

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