

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

July 23rd, 2015

Maui, Hawaii, July 23, 2015 – On news that Trans-Pacific Partnership's (TPP) chief negotiators and trade ministers will meet July 24-31 in Hawaii, Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) President Brian Innes issued the following statement on the status of the TPP trade talks:

“Our members from across Canada’s agriculture and agri-food industry call on all political parties to ensure that Canada is part of this landmark trade agreement and that they support an ambitious, plurilateral and comprehensive TPP agreement.”

As we enter a critical juncture in the talks, our members, who contribute billions to the economy, produce 80 per cent of Canada’s agriculture and agri-food exports and directly employ 500,000 Canadians, cannot stress enough the importance of participating in this historic deal with a region that represents 40 per cent of the world’s economic activity. With this in mind, we are calling leaders of parties to ensure that Canada remains fully engaged in the TPP negotiations as we head into the 11th hour and most critical time of the deal. With the U.S. Congress having now granted President Obama Trade Promotion Authority, it should be clear to everyone that the TPP can be concluded quickly – with or without Canada. It is imperative that Canada is at the table when the TPP is finalized. The impact of the failure to achieve a plurilateral agreement would be felt throughout our economy, as our market share in TPP countries would begin to erode.

By acting now, we can preserve our opportunity to get the best possible deal for Canada. Asia-Pacific countries are top buyers of high value Canadian grains, oilseeds, meats, malt, barley, pulses, soybeans, corn and sugar products. We must prioritize equal access for our farmers, producers, processors and exporters to this region to secure our agricultural future.”

Quick Facts:

- Canada exports over half of the agri-food products that we grow – that is half of our beef/cattle, 70% of our hogs/pork, 65% of our malt, 75% of our wheat, and over 90% of our canola.

- Canada exports \$56 billion a year in agricultural and agri-food products – 65 percent of which go to the TPP region.
- There are over 220,000 farms across Canada. Over 90 per cent of Canada’s farmers are dependent on exports as well about 40 per cent of our food processing sector.
- TPP countries include Canada’s largest and high value importers for agriculture and agri-food products including the United States, Japan and Mexico and emerging markets with strong economic growth such as Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia.

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 \$50 billion in business annually and directly employ close to 500,000 Canadians.

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