



CAFTA ACCA

Canadian Agri-Food
Trade Alliance

Alliance canadienne
du commerce
agroalimentaire

For Immediate Release

Agri-Food Exporters Urge Federal Government to Put Trade at Centre of Canada's Economic Recovery

Ottawa, Ontario – April 8, 2021– The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) today released a comprehensive policy document that outlines how international trade can play a leading role in driving job creation, food security and economic growth across Canada. As COVID-19 continues to batter the Canadian economy, the need for Canada to play to its strengths is the best way to help the economy recover from the crisis.

The document, entitled “*Getting Ambitious and Unleashing Agri-food Trade to Power Canada's Economic Recovery*” provides a series of ideas and actionable policy recommendations for how best the federal government can use the agri-food sector to drive the economy now and ensure Canada's post-pandemic recovery is as strong as possible. It also points to the need to continue to consult and involve stakeholders in the design stage, throughout the negotiations process of agreements but also enforcement and implementation.

CAFTA members are urging the federal government to pursue a variety of policies that will allow the agri-food sector to anchor Canada's economic recovery. Specific recommendations include:

- Reviewing the implementation of Canada's recent free trade agreements (FTAs) to maximize benefits of for agri-food and identify where implementation work remains, starting with the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)
- Creating a Chief of Trade Implementation at Global Affairs Canada to work with industry to focus on “FTA aftercare” for Canadian agri-food and strengthen our capacity to monitor, report and mobilize resources when commitments in FTAs are not respected.
- Accelerating diversification efforts by launching free trade negotiations with the United Kingdom, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia as well as building on the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and concluding talks with the Pacific Alliance
- Intensifying efforts toward WTO modernization in concert with exporters so that the global trading system is once again relevant and at the centre of international trade
- Enhancing international trade engagements and advocacy capacity within the diplomatic network

QUOTES:

“The recommendations we’re proposing will help Canada seize the global opportunity before us at a time when finding ways to create and protect jobs and grow the economy has never been more important. Agri-food exporters stand ready to work with the federal government to earn Canada’s agri-food century. It is time to get ambitious and unleash the prosperity generating power of Canada’s world-class agriculture and agri-food sector.”

“Throughout the global COVID-19 crisis, the agri-food sector has demonstrated clearly that it is foundational to modern life in every corner of the globe. From providing a variety of plentiful, high-quality food to retailers and citizens, to providing feed and inputs to farmers and food manufacturers, agri-food trade has helped ensure grocery store shelves have remained stocked, food prices have not spiked and vital supply chains that underpin the production and transport of food have remained functioning. Canada should play to its strengths by putting agri-food at the centre of Canada’s pandemic response and post-pandemic recovery.”

CAFTA members – including farmers, ranchers and food manufacturers – contribute nearly \$100 billion to Canada’s economy annually and support about a million jobs in urban and rural areas in every region of the country.

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

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