

October 12, 2021



Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance | Alliance canadienne du commerce agroalimentaire

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

RE: Recommendations for Ministerial mandates from Canada’s agri-food exporters

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

As the voice of Canadian agri-food, representing the 90 per cent of farmers, producers, food processors and agri-food exporters who rely on global markets for their livelihoods, we are writing to congratulate you and your party on your victory in Canada’s 44th federal general election. We look forward to working with you and your government in advancing our numerous shared objectives.

As your government continues to fight the pandemic while working on economic recovery, we wanted to highlight actionable suggestions for our sector to help power the success of the wider Canadian economy.

We believe that we can do even more in the weeks and months ahead provided we work closely together to truly seize the opportunities before us. As you undertake the important work of building a cabinet that will lead the federal government’s economic recovery efforts, we want to provide some recommendations for items to include in the mandate letters of ministers that are vital to the success of our sector including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of International Trade, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Minister Innovation, Science, and Industry, and the Minister of Economic Development:

We strongly recommend you consider the following ideas for inclusion in ministerial mandates, many of which overlap the portfolios of the ministers above:

1. Review existing free trade agreements to ensure opportunities are maximized and in particular leverage commitments to resolve CETA implementation issues for Canada’s agri-food exporters.
2. Create a Chief of Trade Implementation at Global Affairs Canada for agri-food, similar to what has been done in the U.S. and the EU, to measure and inform progress and ensure closer government-industry collaboration
3. Prioritize efforts of the Ottawa Group to reinstate the WTO’s Appellate Body and adopt global agri-food policies that fit with 21st century realities
4. Immediately launch trade talks with the UK and ASEAN; and seek to conclude five FTA negotiations by 2023: UK, Indonesia, ASEAN, CPTPP expansion and India.
5. Enhance Canada’s advocacy capacity within the diplomatic network to promote the science behind

Canada's world-class agri-food sector and to protect a trading environment based on rules, science and appropriate risk assessments.

6. Ensure Canada and its negotiators retain all the tools and leverage at their disposal to negotiate ambitious outcomes in all FTA talks and for all the economy as a whole. This means avoiding pre-emptive politically expedient carve-outs that would tie the hands of negotiators and harm Canada's ability to conclude trade agreements that are in the best interests of the entire Canadian economy.

Despite the current challenges before us, the opportunities to create new jobs and sources of prosperity for Canadians in our sector are immense. Over the next 30 years, the global demand for agri-food products will continue to grow rapidly. Driven by population growth and rising incomes around the world, it is projected that agricultural demand in 2050 will be 50 per cent higher than it was in 2013. As the world's fifth largest agri-food exporter, this presents an immense global growth opportunity for Canada.

But to successfully take advantage of what lies ahead, government and industry will need to work hand in hand if we are to capitalize on these opportunities. We know that as economies around the world rebuild, competition is going to be fiercer than ever. The best way for Canada to win is to ensure we are playing to our strengths.

Incorporating the ideas above into the mandates of your next cabinet would send a strong signal that your government recognizes the vital role our sector can play in building back a stronger, more sustainable, and more prosperous Canada.

Our members stand ready to meet the risks and challenges head-on and work productively with your government to the benefit of all Canadians. Working together, we can ensure Canada remains at the forefront of trade liberalization, a steadfast supporter of the global trading system and a leader in selling our high-quality agriculture and agri-food products to the world.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide additional information to you, your staff, and to officials, as well as to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Darling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" and the last name "Darling" clearly distinguishable.

Dan Darling, CAFTA President.