

Agri-food exporters excited by launch of trade negotiations with ASEAN

November 17, 2021

Dan Darling, President of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) today issued the following statement regarding the launch of trade talks between Canada and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

“Agri-food exporters are very excited by the launch of comprehensive talks with ASEAN. We have long believed this should be Canada’s top trade negotiating priority in Southeast Asia and today’s announcement is welcome news.

“As a market of over 640 million people with a GDP of \$3.6 trillion, Canadian agri-food exporters see huge potential in the fast growing and dynamic ASEAN countries.

“Several agriculture and agri-food segments stand to benefit from an ambitious Canada-ASEAN pact including canola, beef, pork, pulses, cereals, oilseeds, malt and processed foods. Removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers may also provide long term opportunity for sugar-containing products and processed food products.

“We will be urging Canada’s negotiators to secure an ambitious agreement which includes tariff liberalization that creates meaningful market access, forward-looking rules of origin provisions that support Canada’s agri-food supply chains and addressing non-tariff barriers that create a more transparent and predictable trading system.

“We call on the federal government to ensure all Parliamentary process requirements are expedited so the first negotiating round can take place in early 2022.

“Throughout the pandemic, our members have made clear that agri-food trade can play a major role in building back better. Today’s announcement is a giant step in the right direction to ensure our sector helps drive Canada’s economic recovery forward.

“Canada’s agri-food sector looks forward to working closely with the federal government to ensure Canada’s export interests are secured in these negotiations.”

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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, 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. In 2017, Canada’s total agri-food exports to ASEAN reached \$1.95 billion. This makes ASEAN Canada’s 4th largest market for agri-food exports.

For further information, please contact:

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