

For Immediate Release

Global Agriculture and Food Exporters call for Renewed Ambition ahead of MC12

There is a pressing need for a breakthrough in WTO farm trade talks

June 10, 2021

The current context of record food prices and increasing food insecurity has given new urgency to the role of trade in addressing the challenges we face today.

Groups representing farmers, ranchers, food producers and exporters from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States of America issued the following statement:

“With record food prices and ever-increasing food insecurity, it would be unimaginable for the WTO to fail to deliver a substantial outcome on agriculture at the upcoming Ministerial Conference.

“Trade plays a central role in addressing food insecurity, including improving availability and access to food, helping to meet demand for more diverse and nutritious food, and improving the predictability and stability of global food markets for producers and consumers.

“That is why commitments to keep international borders open to agri-food help maintain the stability of a network of sectors that need to remain robust and resilient both for the workers they employ and for the people they feed around the world.

“Since 1994, world exports of agricultural products have tripled and food systems around the world have evolved significantly. But WTO rules have not kept pace with 21st century commerce, and urgent action is required.

“We urge all countries to strengthen the global trading system by making substantial and ambitious progress in agricultural reform in the lead-up to the 12th Ministerial Conference. It is time for all WTO members to get serious about agriculture, as an ongoing lack of focus is hurting farmers, ranchers, and consumers worldwide.

“Farmers are at the front lines of sustainability, food security and economic growth. Support for the new SPS (Sanitary/Phytosanitary) Declaration would be a significant first step toward reinforcing international support for transparent, science-based trade in agriculture. WTO members should support and facilitate greater access to the safe use of innovative tools and technologies and engage in a global dialogue on the growing pressures on international food production and trade.

“WTO members must address market access, tariff escalation and tariff quotas for agricultural products while intensifying efforts to eliminate market access barriers in all forms.

“Throughout the pandemic, many countries have demonstrated an ability to share information about measures adopted in response to the crisis in a relatively timely and transparent manner. These practices should be made permanent.

“The WTO's dispute settlement system plays a vital role in the rules-based global trading system. We call on all WTO members to seek an urgent resolution to the current impasse.

“To make real progress, we must engage in serious multilateral negotiation to resolve issues like market access, rules, transparency, and trade-distorting agricultural subsidies, among others.

“Collective reform of domestic support can address food insecurity, increase sustainability in global agriculture, and level the playing field for all farmers.

"The task ahead for all WTO members is not simple but crucial, and the stakes are high. Reinvigorating efforts to reform global trade in agriculture will lift farmers, producers, processors, workers and consumers around the world as we all play by rules that are fair, predictable and enforceable.

Signatories

The American Farm Bureau Federation	AgBiz (South Africa)
Sociedad Rural Argentina	The Brazilian Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock
Sociedad de Agricultores de Colombia, SAC	USA Rice
Federated Farmers of New Zealand	U.S. Wheat Associates
The Australian Farmers Federation	American Seed Trade Association
CropLife America	Canadian Pork Council
CropLife Canada	Cereals Canada
The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance	Pulse Canada
Canola Council of Canada	Grain Growers of Canada
Canadian Canola Growers Association	Food, Health & Consumer Products of Canada
Canadian Cattlemen's Association	Malting Industry Association of Canada
National Cattle Feeder's Association	Canada Grains Council
Canadian Sugar Institute	