



Canadian Pork Producers to Canadian Government on WTO Negotiations: *Let's Move Forward, Not Backward!*

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Ottawa, ON – “We see precious little time remaining for the international community to arrive at a new multilateral trade agreement through the World Trade Organization (WTO)”, says Clare Schlegel, President of the Canadian Pork Council (CPC). “And Canada, as the world’s fourth largest agri-food exporter, must make the most of the opportunity. Instead, Canada is asking to go back on what it agreed to more than three years ago.”

In a recent letter addressed to Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, CPC indicated its alarm over Canada’s rigid stance in market access negotiations, a position which pulls back from what it agreed to in 2004.

In the letter, Mr. Schlegel warns that, “Canada, as a WTO member, agreed to the Framework for Establishing Modalities in Agriculture that was adopted by the General Council on August 1, 2004, under which there would be improvements in access for all products. The current position being articulated by Canada places us in violation of that commitment.”

This week in Geneva, negotiators are involved in intensive discussions on domestic support and market access, two areas of great importance to all Canadian agriculture. Canadian pork producers have representatives present there.

Canada is one of the world’s leading exporters of hogs and pork products. In a recent study, the George Morris Centre, an independent economic research organization, estimated that Canadian pork exports in 2005 were responsible for domestic economic activity amounting to almost \$8 billion and over 40,000 jobs (please see *Pork Export Benefits* at www.georgemorris.org/User/Doc/Benefits%20of%20Exports%20Final%20Report%20101606.pdf).

“Canada, to our knowledge, is the only one among the WTO’s 151 member countries, which is seeking to back away from the 2004 agreement respecting agriculture”, says Mr. Schlegel, a hog and cash crop producer from Perth County, Ontario. He continues, “Walking away from a final deal is not an acceptable option for such a trade-dependent country; therefore we must participate fully, and constructively, in these negotiations.”

The Canadian Pork Council is the national association representing the interests of Canada's hog producers.

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