



CPC Commends Government on Progress on Free Trade Agreements; Need to Complete Doha plus Deal with Korea

For Immediate Release

June 14, 2007

Ottawa – The Canadian Pork Council (CPC) wishes to congratulate International Trade Minister David Emerson, along with Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Chuck Strahl, on completing free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with the European Free Trade Association countries (Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) and the launching of FTA negotiations with Peru, Columbia and the Dominican Republic.

“These trade agreements are crucial in opening up further market access opportunities for Canada,” says Mr. Clare Schlegel, President of the Canadian Pork Council. “The Canadian hog and pork industry has a vital interest in improved export access and not falling behind other countries that have been aggressively pursuing regional trade agreements, such as the U.S. and Chile.”

“These new trade agreements are definitely a step in the right direction,” continues Schlegel, “However, the federal government must also take every opportunity to assist in completing current WTO negotiations (aka the Doha Round) and to complete a free-trade deal with Korea which includes pork. Otherwise, we will find ourselves at a serious disadvantage, compared to countries such as the United States, which has the ‘KORUS’ agreement and many other recently completed deals that, if left unmatched by Canada, will result in our pork and many other products losing out to the U.S. and other exporters in important foreign markets.”

“Our examination of the deal reached between the United States and Korea”, adds Schlegel, who finishes hogs near Stratford, Ontario, “clearly shows Canada would lose its current place as one of Korea’s two most important suppliers. The 50% increase in the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar since 2002 has hit the Canadian hog and pork industries extremely hard. The lack of a FTA with Korea could force many more in our industry to fold.”

-30-

Media Contacts:

Anita DeCoste
Communications Officer
(613) 236-9239 x.277
decoste@cpc-ccp.com

Clare Schlegel
President
(519) 580-6761
clare@sugarfield.ca