



Sheep and Goat Industry Applauds AAFC Support

For Immediate Release

February 6, 2010 – Guelph, Ontario – News of a federal government investment of up to \$6 million for the sheep and goat industry was greeted today with thanks from Dwane Morvik, Chairman of the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) and Andrew Gordanier Vice-Chairman. The funding will be used to help producers eradicate disease, enhance traceability and improve on-farm food safety.

“We are pleased to be working with the Government of Canada to provide more resources and tools for the Canadian sheep producer,” said Morvik. “Currently, because of lack of supply, we can only fill 40 per cent of domestic lamb consumption. This funding will build valuable infrastructure to help us meet the growing demand. The CSF is committed to ensuring the industry is well-positioned to take advantage of markets; we’re thrilled the government also sees the great potential of our industry.”

The first initiative to be launched with the funding is a traceability research project that will test full-scale Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) systems on sheep farms across the country. Electronic livestock production systems have shown potential to benefit entire supply chains from producer to consumer. This pilot project will specifically evaluate the advantages in sheep flocks, with participating producers gaining first-hand experience and providing valuable input back to the industry.

“We appreciate Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) for recognizing the need for such an important initiative,” said Andrew Gordanier, CSF Vice-Chairman, from his farm in Shelburne, Ontario where the announcement was made. “Having Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz here today, visiting a sheep farm where the project is being implemented, clearly demonstrates the government’s support for the Canadian sheep industry. We appreciate the support that Minister Ritz has shown us and look forward to continuing to work together to advance the Canadian industry.”

The funding, made available through Canada’s Economic Action Plan, also provides support for the CSF and its partner organization, the Canadian National Goat Federation, to educate the industry about identification and traceability and implement a scrapie prevalence study.

“It’s important for the small ruminant industry to work together to trace animals, which is a crucial step in eradicating disease,” said Morvik. “Partnering on these initiatives will strengthen our animal health system and help move the industry forward to improve access to international markets and to gain market share domestically.”

On-farm food safety is another priority for the CSF. A portion of funding will be used to further develop the CSF’s On-Farm Food Safety Management.

The Canadian Sheep Federation is a national, non-profit organization that represents all Canadian sheep producers. Its mission is further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry. For more information contact the Canadian Sheep Federation at 1-888-684-7739 or info@cansheep.ca.