

News release

An Innovative, Modern Agriculture Sector to Foster Growth and Prosperity

Saint Andrews, New Brunswick, July 8, 2011 - Federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) Ministers of Agriculture met to discuss the future prospects and potential of the Canadian agriculture and food sector as a significant driver of the economy.

"As a result of greater collaboration between governments and industry, farmers are capitalizing on new market opportunities and the demand for Canada's safe, healthy and nutritious food continues to grow," said federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "Our Governments will continue to work tirelessly to ensure we are creating the market conditions for Canadian farmers to grow and diversify their businesses and remain profitable."

FPT Ministers agreed* that the next policy framework, Growing Forward 2, must help the agriculture industry capitalize on emerging market opportunities in dynamic and innovative ways - supported by world-class research and development, a new generation of farmers, efficient regulatory systems, and modern infrastructure. Building on the success and flexibility of the current policy approach, Ministers agreed to the principles outlined in the Saint Andrews Statement as a guide for officials in their collaboration with industry. The Statement lays out the vision of the next policy framework as a modern, coherent and integrated approach for a progressive sector confronting the challenges of a fast-paced, competitive global economy. The full text of the Saint Andrews Statement is available on the AAFC website.

"The sectors in which Canada has a natural advantage, such as agriculture, hold tremendous potential through the adoption of innovative technologies," said meeting co-chair New Brunswick Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries Michael Olscamp. "It is imperative that governments, industry and research partners expand their collaborative efforts to nurture a culture of successful innovation for greater profitability and sustainability across the sector."

Ministers agreed that future growth will come from the sector's ability to capitalize on the growing demand for world-class Canadian products. The sector accounts for approximately two million jobs that contribute to Canada's position as the world's fifth-largest exporter of agriculture and food products with nearly \$35.5 billion in exports last year. Ministers reiterated their positions on marketing mechanisms such as the Canadian Wheat Board and reaffirmed their support for supply management. Ministers applauded a growing list of recent trade successes and recognized that market development and access will yield the greatest gains for Canadian producers and processors.

In terms of domestic markets, Ministers reviewed the results of the pilot projects launched in February to expand interprovincial trade in meat while maintaining Canada's high level of food safety. They agreed to move quickly and to strengthen efforts to advance these pilots. Ministers also reviewed the evolving flooding situation which farmers are facing across Canada and pledged to continue working together to assess what further assistance is required. Ministers acknowledged the progress being made on a national livestock traceability system due to the shared efforts of industry and governments to move it forward.

Ministers look forward to the next annual meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon, September 12-14, 2012.

* with the exception of Ontario

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