

May 26, 2011

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Mr. Harper:

As leaders of Canada's major agriculture sectors, we congratulate you on the success of the recent federal election and wish you and your Cabinet our best as you embark on your renewed mandate.

In particular we would like to acknowledge your commitment to a strong, ambitious trade agenda for Canada and offer our continued support and encouragement for your Government to pursue meaningful market expansion around the globe.

Our industries have been strong supporters of this Government's trade priorities including efforts to conclude the WTO and to negotiate trade deals with key markets including the EU, India and, most recently, Japan. Of particular importance to our organizations, however, is the resumption of trade negotiations with South Korea.

South Korea is a priority market for our sectors. In 2010, Canada exported \$600 million in agriculture and food products to South Korea. Our organizations accounted for more than half of that trade.

Since Canada's FTA negotiations with South Korea broke off in 2008, South Korea has concluded FTA's with the EU and the United States, two of our major competitors. In addition, South Korea is negotiating FTA's with a number of other countries like Australia, New Zealand and Mexico, all of which are direct competitors with Canada. As South Korea continues to negotiate successful FTA's with other countries we are at risk of losing our competitiveness and will ultimately lose South Korea as a major export market.



It is imperative that Canada resume FTA negotiations with South Korea as soon as possible. We estimate that a comprehensive FTA with South Korea could preserve our current trade and could over time lead to an additional \$600 million in agri-food exports - doubling our current exports.

We recognize and support Canada's WTO complaint against South Korea for failing to lift its BSE restrictions. These measures block beef trade and will eliminate any potential benefits for our beef and cattle sector under an FTA. A resolution of this dispute will be critical to shepherding an FTA with South Korea to conclusion.

We encourage your Government to make the Canada-South Korea FTA an immediate priority and we look forward to meeting with you at your earliest convenience to discuss the resumption of FTA negotiations with that key trading partner.

Sincerely,



Edouard Asnong, Chair
Canada Pork International



Rick White, General Manager
Canadian Canola Growers Association



Travis Toews, President
Canadian Cattlemen's Association



Jim Laws, Executive Director
Canadian Meat Council



Jurgen Preugschas, Chair
Canadian Pork Council



Robert Broeska, President
Canadian Oilseed Processors Association



JoAnne Buth, President
Canola Council of Canada



Phil de Kemp, President
Malting Industry Association of Canada



Richard Phillips, Executive Director
Grain Growers of Canada

c.c. The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food
The Honourable Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade

