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Canada

Trade Policy Monitoring

Ag Minister Vanclief Urges New Round of WTO

Negotiations for Real Agricultural Reform

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Report Highlights:

Agriculture Minister Vanclief said that Cairns Group Ministers are united and determined to push for agricultural reform and that they are committed to establishing a fair, market-oriented agricultural trading system. "In the WTO agriculture negotiations, Canada's objective is to achieve a substantial reduction or elimination of trade distorting domestic support, the elimination of export subsidies and significant improvements in market access," added Vanclief. However, unlike other Cairns Group member countries who are pursuing a free trade agenda, Canada continues to insist on "managed trade" by protecting its supply-managed dairy and poultry industries.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Ottawa [CA1], CA

MINISTER VANCLIEF URGES NEW ROUND OF WTO NEGOTIATIONS FOR REAL AGRICULTURAL REFORM

The following is based on a September 5 news release from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lyle Vanclief said in Punta del Este, Uruguay, that Cairns Group Ministers are united and determined to push for agricultural reform and that they are committed to establishing a fair, market-oriented agricultural trading system.

"During the last few days Canada put forward a strong case for the initiation of a wider set of negotiations which would make the achievement of a significant outcome on agriculture possible. Broad negotiations would allow all exporting countries to achieve meaningful progress towards real agricultural reform," said Minister Vanclief.

The Minister was been in Uruguay to participate in the 22nd Cairns Group Ministerial meeting and to hold bilateral meetings with trading partners such as the United States and Brazil.

Ministers reviewed the progress to date in the World Trade Organization (WTO) agriculture negotiations and stressed the importance of ensuring that the momentum continues in the lead up to and following the WTO ministerial meeting in Doha, Qatar in November.

"In the WTO agriculture negotiations, Canada's objective is to achieve a substantial reduction or elimination of trade distorting domestic support, the elimination of export subsidies and significant improvements in market access," added Mr. Vanclief. The Minister stated that these objectives were set out in Canada's initial negotiating position, which Canada's negotiators will continue to pursue aggressively. Furthermore, he noted that production and marketing decisions on Canadian products will continue to be made in Canada. The government will continue to consult closely with the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector and the provinces throughout these negotiations.

Ministers also met with Cairns Group Farm Leaders who presented a statement outlining their objectives for the WTO negotiations. Canadian farmers were represented by Bob Friesen, President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

"Cairns Group Farm Leaders agreed that the way forward is for Ministers to launch a broad round of negotiations with an acceptable negotiating agenda, and they encouraged Cairns Ministers to push for equity and compliance in the next round," said Mr. Friesen.

The Cairns Group member countries include: Australia, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Fiji, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Paraguay, the Philippines, Thailand, South Africa, and Uruguay.

Comments:

Canada, like other Cairns Group members, urges real agricultural reform in its drive for free farm trade through the reduction or elimination of trade-distorting domestic support, the elimination of export subsidies, and significant improvement in market access; but unlike other Cairns Group member countries who are pursuing a free trade agenda, Canada, when it states that "production and management decisions will continue to be made in Canada" continues to insist on "managed trade" by protecting its supply-managed dairy and poultry industries.

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