



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canada's Meat Processing Industry Praises Market Access to South Korea for Canadian Beef

Ottawa, Ont. [June 27, 2011] Canada's meat processing industry is grateful for the hard work of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz and International Trade Minister Ed Fast in reaching an agreement with South Korea for Canadian beef.

This agreement with South Korea provides the foundation for resumption of full market access for Canadian beef and beef products. The first step includes access to the South Korean market for beef from animals under 30 months of age.

Canadian Meat Council President Scott Entz was very pleased with the announcement. "South Korea represents one of the last remaining major countries to resume trade in beef and beef products with Canada. Finally after eight years Canada will be able to export its quality beef products to the world's tenth largest importer."

With an estimated 48 million inhabitants and a GDP of over \$ 1 trillion, Korea is the largest of the four "Asian tigers" (Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore). Korea's remarkable, and rapid, recovery from the 1997 Asian financial crisis has resulted in its emergence as the 12th largest merchandise trading nation in the world. It is a member of the G20 and the OECD.

Canada and Korea are established trade partners. In 2010, two-way merchandise trade was approximately \$9.7 billion (Canada exported \$3.6 billion and imported \$6.1 billion).

"This agreement with Korea to resume trade in beef is not just good for Canada's beef industry" stated Entz. "The agreement also brings hope of renewed Free Trade Agreement talks between Canada and Korea to our Canadian pork industry that exported \$100 million worth of pork to South Korea in 2010 and \$125 million in 2009.

The Canadian Meat Council is calling on the Canadian government to resume the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks with Korea that have been interrupted since 2008. With the recent agreement between South Korea and the United States, the Canadian meat industry is very concerned that postponing the FTA

talks any further will seriously affect the competitiveness of the meat industry and all other Canadian sectors exporting to Korea.

“If Canada is lagging behind the U.S. and the EU in the implementation of the tariff reduction schedules, the negative impact on Canadian exports will carry throughout the tariff reduction period. Canada will lose its status as a competitive supplier to South Korea for the next decade due to this tariff gap, so it is crucial to resume and finalise the FTA as soon as possible. Now that our beef access issues are resolved we can move forward swiftly with more negotiations.” stated Entz.

“A Free Trade Agreement with South Korea is the most crucial potential free trade agreement that can be completed for the Canadian meat sector. We are very supportive of and grateful for the government’s efforts to finalize the Canada-EU comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement and the long term potential of the agreement for the meat industry”.

The Canadian meat industry is the largest of our food processing sector with some 67,000 employees and gross annual sales of over \$ 21.4 billion. Last year Canada exported over \$1.4 billion of beef and over \$2.8 billion of pork to over 150 different countries around the world. Canada’s meat processing industry is made up of over 400 federally registered establishments, often located in rural settings adding jobs and important economic activity to the life of urban and rural Canada.

The Canadian Meat Council has been representing Canada’s federally inspected meat processing industry since 1919.

-30-

For more information, contact:

Jim Laws
Executive Directors
Canadian Meat Council
613-729-3911, ext 24