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Canada's meat processing industry praises market access to China for Canadian beef and tallow

OTTAWA, Ont., - Canada's meat processing industry is grateful for the hard work of the Right Honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz and International Trade Minister Peter Van Loan in reaching an agreement with China for Canadian beef.

This agreement with China provides the foundation for a staged approach to full market access for Canadian beef and beef products. The first step includes access to the Chinese market for boneless beef derived from animals under 30 months of age and tallow for industrial use.

Canadian Meat Council President Brian Read was very pleased with the announcement. "China represents one of the last remaining major countries to resume trade in beef and beef products with Canada. China is the fourth largest economy in the world and is already Canada's third most important agriculture and agri-food trading partner."

China's Gross Domestic Product is growing at unprecedented rates – hitting 9 per cent in 2008. With a Chinese population greater than 1.3 billion, Canada's beef industry has an incredible opportunity to fill China's needs with more Canadian beef.

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 \$1.3 billion of beef and \$2.6 billion of pork to over 150 different countries around the world. Canada's meat processing industry is made up of over 500 federally registered establishments, often located in rural settings adding jobs and important economic activity to the life of rural Canada.

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

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