



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Canada's Meat Processing Industry Supports New Trade Vision**

**OTTAWA, ON, Monday February 7, 2011-** Canada's meat processing industry fully supports the shared vision for perimeter security and economic competitiveness announced by Prime Minister Harper and President Obama.

Canadian Meat Council President Brian Read was very pleased with the announcement. "We have a long history of working very closely with our colleagues from the United States. Our industry is truly a North American one with many of our members operating farms and meat processing facilities on both sides of the border. "

Canada's meat industry is the largest of the food processing industries employing some 67,000 people and with gross sales of over \$21.4 billion. In 2009 Canada exported 378,000 tonnes of beef valued at almost \$1.3 billion to 71 countries. Of that total the United States of America is by far the most important, with Canadian beef exports totaling 293,000 tonnes valued at \$960 million.

In addition, in 2009 Canada exported just over 1 million tonnes of pork valued at over \$2.6 billion to 114 countries. Of that total- the highest tonnage- 329,000 tonnes of pork valued at \$835 million -was exported to the United States.

"Trade is incredibly important to our meat industry in Canada" stated Read. "With only 33 million Canadians we value our trading relationship with our nearby favourite customers- the 308 million US consumers to the south of us. It has been almost 24 years since the signing of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement in 1987 and now is the time to move our partnership forward to secure our joint prosperity."

"We believe that the time has come for Canada to move forward with meat inspection reform and to work harder to recognize and build on the strengths of the Canadian and U.S. meat inspection systems.

Imported meat from the United States is already inspected by the US Department of Agriculture and the meat is marked with "US Inspected and Passed Department of Agriculture". Canadian meat exported to the USA is already inspected by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and marked with the Meat Inspection Legend. The border inspections of meat are merely "re-inspections" of USDA and CFIA inspected meat. Re-inspecting meat in its final package in a

box in a truck is not nearly as worthwhile as inspecting meat while it is being made in the meat processing facility.

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

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