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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WTO Ministerial Conference Calls for Completion of Multilateral Trade Agreement in 2010

Calgary, Alberta, December 4, 2009 –

The Seventh Session of the WTO Ministerial Conference wrapped up with Ministers from WTO member governments saying that the eight-year-old Doha Round negotiations should be concluded quickly and several calling for a political push early in 2010 so the talks can end next year. The conference was held November 30 to December 2, 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. The general theme for discussion was, “The WTO, the Multilateral Trading System and the Current Economic Environment”.

Federation President Ted Haney was in Geneva to attend the meetings. “I am disappointed that the process is not moving faster right now – especially considering the strong support that world leaders voice for the successful completion of the Doha Round of WTO negotiations at meetings such as the G20,” says Haney.

“The Canadian beef industry will benefit from an ambitious and timely completion of these negotiations,” he says. “Our industry stands to gain approximately \$1 billion in additional trade just through improvements in market access. The Canadian beef industry will further benefit through the reduction in trade distorting domestic subsidies and elimination of export subsidies – both of which are part of the proposed deal at this time. Added up, our industry is losing some \$100 million per month in trade benefit each month that this deal is not signed and implemented.

“I am very pleased that Canada's trade-oriented industry was present and active in Geneva during the WTO Ministerial Meeting. Representatives from the Canadian beef, cattle, pork, wheat, barley, canola, specialty crops and sugar sectors were present and met with many industry and government representatives to clearly communicate their complete support for liberalized trade available through a successful Doha negotiation. Canada's trade-oriented agriculture sectors stand to gain approximately \$3 billion in annual exports just through improved market access.

“Continued support for a successful Doha Round of WTO negotiations is required in Canada and in most nations' capitals,” says Haney.

According to the Canadian Agri-Food Alliance (CAFTA), Canada's agricultural sector depends on a fair and open international trading system, with 92 per cent of Canadian farmers reliant upon exports for their livelihood. In a CAFTA news release, CAFTA President Darcy Davis said, “The longer we continue without a multilateral agreement to stabilize trade, the greater the risk that Canadian farmers will be increasingly

disadvantaged in international markets by protectionist measures.” The CAFTA release said that many countries are using existing rules to maintain export subsidies, support domestic producers, and use up flexibilities in current agreements to protect markets from competitive imports from nations like Canada; and that there is also growing use of trade-distorting non-tariff barriers.

The call for serious re-engagement in the negotiations was also made by the Carins Group, a coalition of the world’s major agricultural exporting nations, including Canada, that were organized as a group under the leadership of Australia. According to the Carins Group, “We must secure an ambitious and balanced outcome to the Doha Round in 2010 in line with the agreed mandate, based on the progress already made, including with regard to modalities. This is essential for the strength of the multilateral trading system. This outcome must include a major package of reforms to agricultural trade, which continues to be highly distorted. Such a package must substantially increase market access opportunities, substantially reduce trade-distorting domestic support and eliminate export subsidies in 2013.”

The Federation operates offices in the key international markets of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Mexico

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