



Farm Insight

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Update: World Trade Negotiations

Canada commits to strengthening WTO and reasserts balanced agricultural policy at Ministerial Meeting in Geneva that concluded earlier this month.

A Ministerial meeting involving nations participating in the current Doha round of trade negotiations was held in early December. This WTO Ministerial meeting was the first in U.S. President Barack Obama's term of office. The most significant change resulting from the U.S. regime change is a shift in emphasis with respect to trade negotiations.

Despite this shift in focus from the world's largest political powers, considerable pressure still exists within the WTO administration and from member nations to conclude the talks quickly. WTO Director General Pascal Lamy continues to publicly emphasize a deal as the most expedient way to remedy current economic instability.

For its part, Canada, through Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Gerry Ritz, recommitted to supporting supply

management, while maintaining its balanced approach to agricultural trade. Minister Ritz declared Canada to be "committed to creating opportunities for exporters and (we) consistently stand up for supply-managed sectors. The Minister's language suggests Canada is very much hoping to pursue an agreement which satisfies all.

At the same time, Minister of International Trade, The Hon. Stockwell Day, pushed forward on the objective of a successful conclusion to the talks.

"As a trading nation, Canada has much to gain from participating in the WTO, which is the best forum for strengthening trade with other economies, including our most important partners," said Minister Day. "It is now more important than ever to resist protectionism and to open new markets. Canada supports an ambitious conclusion to the Doha Development Round, which would

generate prosperity and speed up the global recovery. Canada will do everything possible to support the WTO in this objective."

WTO members are launching another push for a deal in the Doha Round negotiations, with a 'stocktaking' exercise by March 2010 to determine whether the long-running talks can be brought to a close by the end of the year.

Chicken Farmers of Ontario and its supply managed partners continue to encourage Canada in its efforts to secure a deal that will benefit all of Canadian agriculture, and Canadian consumers – while advancing development for emerging economies. We will continue to work actively with our federal and provincial representative to meet this end goal.

SM-5 Ministerial Report

A delegation representing the SM-5 was present in Geneva and participated in a number of briefings and meetings with Canadian officials present including: Canadian Ambassador John Gero, Canadian Agriculture Negotiator Gilles Gauthier, WTO Agriculture Negotiations Chairman, David Walker; and an SM5 meeting with Minister Ritz.

Canadian Ambassador to the WTO, John Gero, provided an overview of the

issues that were discussed over the three day meeting, including key themes expressed by members during the plenary session – impact of regional trade agreements, ensuring the effectiveness of food aid and the WTO’s role in global governance.

On the Doha round of negotiations, Ambassador Gero reiterated that Ministers had, once again pledged their support towards the completion of the Round by 2010. He also indicated that in order to keep this renewed commitment alive and moving forward, senior officials

will be tasked with developing a more detailed roadmap for the coming months.

In response to a question on the perception that US unprepared to negotiate, Ambassador Gero responded that all 153 have their respective positions, and for many members, including Canada, that current text is not acceptable.

Chicken Farmers of Ontario appreciates the ongoing support the federal government has given to supply management in international trade discussions.

McGuinty Government Passes Animal Health Act, 2009

The Animal Health Act will provide the farming industry and the government the necessary tools to prevent, detect and respond to animal diseases and other related health events. Some of these tools include

- *Enabling the use of quarantine orders, surveillance zones and animal health control area orders to help control the spread of any detected disease or hazard*
- *Supporting a future traceability framework for the quick identification and control of disease and food safety hazards.*

"This important legislation establishes a framework that will protect our animals and make our agri-food sector more competitive." Explained Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. "I look forward to working with industry partners as we develop regulations under the act that will further enhance our ability to protect Ontario’s livestock and poultry."

CFO supports the government’s efforts to improve its ability to manage and respond to animal health issues, explained Dr. Gwen Zellen, Vice President Food Safety, Operations and Environmental Affairs. "We’re committed to industry and government partnership as we work together to protect Ontario’s poultry and livestock industry."

When will this act be enforced?

A. While the act has been passed, it will not be enforced until it has been proclaimed.

How will the Animal Health Act impact me and my farm business?

A. In the New Year, the Ministry plans to establish an ad hoc committee which will guide the development of initial regulations that will come under this bill. The committee will be made up of representatives from across the industry. CFO looks forward to ongoing consultation with the government and our industry partners to ensure the perspectives of Ontario’s chicken industry are represented in the regulations that will fall under this act.