

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Egg Farmers Concerned with Draft Modalities Paper on Agriculture Canadian Ministers urged to focus attention on “sensitive products”

OTTAWA, (June 22, 2006) – The draft modalities paper published today for developing an agreement on agriculture at the World Trade Organization (WTO) is a disappointing document that fails to reflect the Canadian position on trade. This is the message the country’s egg farmers will carry to federal and provincial Ministers of Agriculture and Trade in Geneva next week.

“Canada must not support this paper as the Canadian trade position is simply not reflected in it,” said Laurent Souigny, Chairman of the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency. “Our ministers have assured us repeatedly that they are going to the wall to defend the interests of all agricultural producers, including those operating under supply management. We remain confident that our Government will stick to its position and continue to look for ways to bridge the gaps among WTO member countries.”

At issue is the emerging definition of the “sensitive products” category, which is designed for countries to designate specific products outside the general tariff reduction formula. Unlike Canada, the European Union and the United States have flexibility to reduce tariffs applying to their sensitive products and can offset any loss in import controls with taxpayer-funded subsidies directly to farmers. Conversely, Canada’s egg farmers derive all income directly from the marketplace and do not have the flexibility enjoyed by other WTO members.

“We farmers remain firm in our call for no over-quota tariff reductions on eggs and egg products coming into the Canadian domestic egg market, and we stand united behind our appeal for no increases in minimum market access,” said Mr. Souigny. “Lowering over-quota tariffs will significantly undermine our industry without providing meaningful increases in export opportunities for non-supply managed sectors. All countries have their own sensitivities and different approaches to supporting farmers. In Canada, supply management enables us to earn a living from the market, and the bottom line is this: our farmers, and Canadians in general, want to see supply management upheld.”

“The government has recognized that our industry is among the successful sectors in Canadian agriculture,” added Mr. Souigny. “We’ve been in frequent contact with government and with the Trade and Agriculture Ministers, and what we’ve heard and continue to hear is that they unequivocally support supply management.”

Mr. Souigny will be among a number of farmers traveling to meet with government officials at next week’s WTO ministerial meetings in Geneva, as negotiators work to secure a positive outcome for supply management and for all Canadian agriculture.



1501 – 112, rue Kent St.

Ottawa, Ontario

K1P 5P2

☎ (613) 238-2514

☎ (613) 238-1967

✉ info@canadaegg.ca
info@oeufcanada.ca

www.canadaegg.ca
www.oeufcanada.ca

A recent poll conducted by Léger Marketing shows Canadians overwhelmingly agree the federal government should support the supply management approach to poultry and egg farming, with 98% saying they want access to a stable supply of made-in-Canada food. The same poll revealed that 83% agree supply management is a better approach to ensuring a decent living for farmers than taxpayer-funded subsidies.

- 30 -

For more information or to arrange interviews with farmers going to Geneva, please contact:

Bernadette Cox
Corporate and Public Affairs Manager
Canadian Egg Marketing Agency
Work: (613) 238-2514 ext. 235
Cell: (613) 253-6567