



## News Release

# WTO Negotiations: Oceans Away from a Level Playing Field in Agriculture

*Dairy, poultry and egg farmers meeting politicians to ensure Canadian agricultural interests are at the heart of Canada's trade strategy.*

Ottawa, October 19, 2005 - Canada's dairy, poultry and egg farmers today called on the Canadian government to categorically reject trade proposals tabled by the European Union and the United States last week at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

"The government must be very firm during WTO negotiations being held in Geneva this week as these proposals do nothing for Canadian farmers," said David Fuller, Chair of Chicken Farmers of Canada.

"The EU and US propose cutting tariffs, while at the same time giving themselves latitude to offset any revenue loss with subsidies to their producers," he explained. Fuller, who was at WTO meetings in Zurich last week, added that Canadian farmers who rely on the marketplace for their revenue would suffer serious consequences."

Fuller stressed that these proposals will not correct inequities of the previous round: "We already import a larger percentage of dairy products under tariff-rate quotas than the US and more poultry than Europe, yet neither is offering more access in this round. We cannot cut over-quota tariffs and offer more access on top of that. Such proposals would put at risk the stability in the dairy, egg and poultry markets, would not benefit other agriculture sectors in Canada and would offer no real solution to the Doha Round for development."

"Despite the two largest subsidizers speaking of cutting subsidies, Canadian farmers should not expect the EU and US to lower the actual amount they spend," said Jacques Laforge, President of Dairy Farmers of Canada. "While the number might sound big, even a 60% cut in U.S. subsidy commitments would allow our neighbour to dole out more subsidies than it currently does. Subsidies are subsidies, no matter what colour the cheque is. Having limits on some types of subsidies but none on 'green subsidies' is no way to help farmers get their income from the marketplace - in developed or developing countries."

Dairy, poultry and egg farmers across the country are meeting with their federal and provincial politicians to tell them that the current proposals could have a dramatic impact on supply management, the stability of their industries and their contribution to the well-being of rural communities across the country.

Farmers expect their government to aggressively advance the Canadian agricultural trade position, defend Canadian interests and work on a global trading environment that is more equitable for farmers in the future.

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