
Communiqué

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Canada

AGRICULTURE MINISTERS FOCUS ON THE ECONOMY, GROWTH AND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN PRODUCERS



TORONTO, Ontario – February 5, 2010



Federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Agriculture met today on a range of issues critical to the long term success of farmers and the agricultural and agri-food sector across the country.



The meeting, co-chaired by the Honourable Gerry Ritz, federal Minister of Agriculture, and the Honourable Bob Bjornerud, Saskatchewan's Minister of Agriculture, focused on the economic situation, the competitiveness of the sector and ongoing efforts to strengthen Canada's food safety and livestock traceability systems.



"Canadian agricultural products are among the best in the world," said Minister Ritz. "With the Market Access Secretariat now fully up and running, we are working with provinces and territories, and with industry, to identify their market priorities, both domestically and abroad, to ensure we seize every opportunity to sell our products."



Ministers discussed the Business Risk Management (BRM) strategic review, recognizing the need to look to the future. FPT governments will initiate consultations with producers and agricultural groups on the challenges facing the sector, BRM programs and the opportunities that lie ahead. The results of those consultations will be reported back to Ministers at their next meeting.



"Governments have a responsibility to listen to producers," Minister Bjornerud said. "Farmers and ranchers are the first people impacted by the policy and programs we create. We need to engage our producers as we work to improve our Business Risk Management programming."



Governments are also determined to ensure that programs continue to respond to the sector's needs, including the examination of options such as livestock insurance, to help producers secure a stable and prosperous future.



The federal, provincial and territorial agriculture ministers will hold their annual meeting in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, July 6-8, 2010.

