

Table of Contents

Fisheries minister calls addition of seal meat to parliamentary restaurant menu good promotion.....	1
MP wants livestock vaccines harmonized (Simcoe Reformer , 5).....	2
Salmonella warning over granola bar (National Post, A10).....	4
Blood oaths (National Post, A16).....	5
Du purin pour produire de l'énergie.....	7
Un rapport démagogique.....	9
Funding for nursery landscape & greenhouse vegetable production (Hanna Herald , 23).....	11
Prep–Agriculture–Report (bnw.....	12
Pork industry eyes better times.....	14

Fisheries minister calls addition of seal meat to parliamentary restaurant menu good promotion

PUBLICATION: The Guardian (Charlottetown)
DATE: 2009.11.27
SECTION: The Province
PAGE: A4
BYLINE: Mike Carson
DATELINE: SUMMERSIDE
ILLUSTRATION: Shea; Easter

The word seal harvest conjures up a wide variety of responses but one that is coming from Ottawa these days is marketability.

In a unique move, the parliamentary restaurant on Parliament Hill is adding seal meat to its menu, a move that has received kudos from two Island MPs.

"I think it's a pretty good promotion for seal products," said federal Fisheries and Oceans Minister Gail Shea.

"I think it's a good statement. Seal meat is eaten by plenty of Canadians, the Inuit in the north and East Coasters on a regular basis."

The Board of Internal Economy made the decision to include seal meat on the parliamentary restaurant menu and the minister said it is a show of support for the industry.

The jury is still out on how the new menu addition will fare but that will come in time.

"I think people will want to try it for sure and it all depends on how it is prepared," said Shea.

She said Canada has markets in China and possibly Japan for seal products.

"There's quite exciting things happening around using all of the seal carcass for different products ... If we can really diversify the product and diversify the market because we do have plenty of raw product. It could be so good for the East Coast and the north."

Malpeque MP **Wayne Easter** said seal meat is a part of the Canadian cuisine and supports the move.

"It is a meat that some people of Canadian culture do in fact eat. I've eaten it before in (Iles de la Madeleine) when I was chair of the fisheries committee. It wasn't something that I'd drive halfway across the Island for. But I think like a lot of wild meat, or water or fish or meat products it would depend on the chef and how it's cooked."

That's not the only unusual Canadian cuisine Easter has sampled.

"I've had black bear meat before that I really liked and some that I didn't. It depends on how it's cooked. I think it's a good idea to have seal meat in the restaurant. It will depend on the various ways it's cooked whether people will want to go back for more or not. But it is part of the Canadian culture cuisine in some areas but not in southern Canada."

MP wants livestock vaccines harmonized (Simcoe Reformer , 5)

PUBLICATION: Simcoe Reformer
DATE: 2009.11.27
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: 5
BYLINE: PAUL MORDEN, SUN MEDIA
WORD COUNT: 305

Lambton–Kent–Middlesex MP Bev Shipley wants to untangle some of the red tape he says puts Canadian farmers at a disadvantage.

Shipley said farmers in other countries have access to livestock vaccines and other products that haven't been approved yet for sale in Canada.

"I have heard from many local farmers who say they are placed at a competitive disadvantage," Shipley said.

So, he has tabled a private members motion in Parliament he hopes can change that.

It asks federal regulators to take into account testing and approvals on products that have gone through in the U. S., and other countries — "provided that the results are consistent with Canadian standards" — when clearing them to be used in Canada.

"We simply do not need to reinvent the wheel every time a new product comes on the market, especially if the research has already been done and there isn't any compromise on standards," Shipley said.

Food grown with the help of products Canadian farmers aren't allowed to use can end up being imported and sold in Canadian grocery stores, said Shipley.

"It's one of those competitive disadvantages our farmers have had for years."

The regulatory approvals process is based on science and "science doesn't change when it crosses the border," Shipley said.

"There should be some sort of a process where we can parallel the information and the science that has been done."

Any particular concerns Canadian regulators have about a product could still be addressed, he added.

Shipley's motion, scheduled for debate in the new year, is welcomed by Stewart Cressman, a director with the Ontario Pork Producers' Marketing Board.

"I think this is a very positive move," he said.

The need to harmonize approvals for livestock vaccines and antibiotics **farmers** use has been an issue since back when the free **trade** agreement was being negotiated, he said.

"That's all producers are asking for, the same tools in the toolbox that the U. S. producer has, at comparable cost," Cressman said. "And not two or three years later, as has been the case in the past."

The fact Canada has a relatively small number of farmers to buy their products can discourage companies from going through the expensive approvals process here, according to Cressman.

Meanwhile, Canada has to **export** 40 to 50 per cent of the pork it produces, Cressman said.

If Canadian farmers don't have access to vaccines and other products their competitors are using to reduce their costs, "it just put us at a big disadvantage," he said. KEYWORDS=CITY AND DISTRICT

Salmonella warning over granola bar (National Post, A10)

IDNUMBER 200911270114
PUBLICATION: National Post
PAGE: A10
DATE: 2009.11.27
SECTION: Canada
EDITION: National
SOURCE: Canwest News Service
COLUMN: National Report
DATELINE: OTTAWA
WORD COUNT: 141

The **Canadian Food Inspection Agency** issued a warning yesterday over a granola bar distributed through a popular dieting program. The agency said the Canadian version of Nutrisystem brand peanut butter granola bars could contain **salmonella** bacteria and, along with Nutrisystem Canada, is advising the public not to eat the product. The company has voluntarily recalled the product. The bars, which are manufactured in the United States, are sold in 40-gram packages. The recalled product has UPC code 6 32674 37016 7 and lot code TC05219B. No illnesses have been reported in relation to the potentially contaminated product. The bars are only sold through Nutrisystem's website, the Shopping Channel and a distribution phone line.

Blood oaths (National Post, A16)

IDNUMBER 200911270127
PUBLICATION: National Post
PAGE: A16
DATE: 2009.11.27
SECTION: Editorials
EDITION: National
SOURCE: National Post
WORD COUNT: 762

Looking for work? Agriculture and **Agri-Food Canada**, a federal government agency, is recruiting a research assistant at their Saint-Hyacinthe, Que., location. Salary is listed as \$52,225 to \$63,538, and French is essential. If you're interested, submit your application by Dec. 3.

And when you do, make sure you get your ethnicity straight. That's because, like all government agencies, Agriculture and **Agri-Food Canada** "is committed to achieving a skilled, diversified workforce that reflects the diversity of the Canadian population. We encourage members of the following employment equity groups to apply and self-identify: women (especially in non-traditional occupational groups), members of a visible minority group, aboriginal people, and persons with a disability."

"Self-identify" is, of course, a euphemism for "Don't forget to cash in on your DNA." Decades after traditional forms of discrimination were banned from Canadian workplaces, our own government continues to boast that it judges people by the color of their skin and the nature of their sex organs.

Why do we permit this ongoing silent scandal? Racism and sexism are indefensible as government policies — even, in this case, when they take the form of "reverse" discrimination in favour of historically disadvantaged groups.

Aside from undermining our civil service by encouraging the hiring of potentially less-qualified recruits, affirmative action serves to stigmatize legitimately talented female, aboriginal and minority staffers as sub-par charity cases. Anecdotal reports from government workers suggest that many aboriginal workers in particular are shuffled into decorous paper-shuffling positions: Since their jobs are deemed untouchable for political reasons, it is assumed, best to put them in positions where they can't do any harm if they turn out to be duds.

As if all of this weren't mortifying enough for all concerned, the Public Service Commission has just sent out a directive advising that, as of Jan. 1, all candidates for targeted aboriginal jobs must sign formal declarations attesting that they are real, genuine, bona fide aboriginals. "We want to make sure jobs that require people who know about aboriginal concerns and culture are ... held by people who are truly aboriginal," [Public Service Commission president Maria] Barrados said. "We're asking them to sign a form and declare they are, and if they give false or misleading information, it will cost them their jobs."

Go to the PSC website and you will find all sorts of information related to the new policy — including, most pathetically, details about how you can tattle on a co-worker who pretends to be aboriginal but really isn't.

We suppose we understand the reasons for the new PSC policy: If you're going to have an explicitly racist policy that advantages Group A, you don't want it advantaging pseudo-Group-A poseurs and wannabes. At

the same time, the whole painful exercise shows us what a degrading exercise affirmative action has become in this country. To understand the hypocrisy at play here, just imagine if the government were asking its citizens to prove that they were genuine Aryans — or Jews, or Frenchmen. Only when it comes to natives does our more–progressive–than–thou society suddenly regress to the 19th–century, phrenology–era notion that a person's worth is shaped by his genetic racial category.

If the government were truly interested in a candidate's substantive knowledge of natives' rich heritage and special socioeconomic circumstances — which truly would be relevant to certain kinds of government jobs — they could simply ask them about these matters in the standard interview process. But, of course, such a policy would be unthinkable — because it would serve to admit (gasp!) white people who happened to be knowledgeable about native issues. It would also serve to reject ethnic natives who simply have no knowledge about or interest in their ancestry.

In other words, through both false negatives and positives, it would interfere with the true goal of implementing an explicitly discriminatory policy that gives thumbs up or thumbs down to people on the basis of their bloodline.

If Ottawa truly wants to help natives in this country, let us reform the reserve system — and, especially, the native education systems — so that aboriginal job applicants do not need an artificial leg up when they apply for work. As this week's news shows, the shortcut of affirmative action is not only morally objectionable, it reduces the act of Indian "self–identification" to an embarrassing farce.

Du purin pour produire de l'énergie

PUBLICATION:	La Voix de l'Est
DATE:	2009.11.27
SECTION:	Actualité
PAGE:	5
BYLINE:	Laliberté, Michel
PHOTO:	photo Alain Dion photo archives La Voix de l'Est
DATELINE:	Saint-Césaire
ILLUSTRATION:	François Boulay, des Élevages B &F Boulay de Saint-Césaire, planche sur un projet d'usine de méthanisation pour traiter du lisier de porcs.; L'usine traiterait chaque jour 350 mètres cubes de lisier pour produire chaque année un mégawatt d'électricité, l'équivalent de la consommation annuelle d'environ 130 maisons.

Des producteurs porcins de la MRC de Rouville

planchent sur un projet de méthanisation du lisier pour produire de l'électricité et du biodiésel. En plus de tirer des profits du procédé, ils régleraient du coup leur plus gros problème environnemental, soit la disposition des rejets de leurs animaux.

Le projet, piloté par les dirigeants des Élevages B &F Boulay de Saint-Césaire en collaboration avec le Club **Agri-Durable**, permettrait d'utiliser chaque jour 350 mètres cubes de lisier pour produire chaque année un mégawatt d'électricité, l'équivalent de la consommation annuelle d'environ 130 maisons. Le projet, évalué à 11,4 millions de dollars, entraînerait la création d'une dizaine d'emplois.

Selon le procédé proposé, le lisier ainsi que d'autres matières organiques **agricoles** seront envoyés dans des cuves de fermentation où ils seront chauffés à de très hautes températures pendant 40 jours. Les activités bactériennes libéreront du biogaz (du méthane). Ce biogaz serait ensuite brûlé pour alimenter des turbines, produisant de l'électricité.

Les matières sèches restantes du procédé de méthanisation seraient par la suite transformées en biodiésel. C'est là que réside la clé pour rentabiliser de telles installations, a signalé hier matin Réjean Galvin de la firme Samson Bélair Deloitte et Touche en dévoilant l'étude de faisabilité financière du projet.

Produire et vendre seulement de l'électricité ne permettrait pas de rentabiliser le projet, fait remarquer François Boulay, un des promoteurs. Le prix du kilowatt/heure offert par Hydro-Québec (8 ¢ pour les projets éoliens) est trop bas pour couvrir la production d'électricité, explique-t-il. Il faut donc trouver d'autres sources de **revenus**, soutient l'homme d'affaires. En ce sens, la vente de biodiésel est très prometteuse. L'étude de Samson Bélair Deloitte et Touche évalue que l'usine de méthanisation pourrait engranger 730 000 \$ chaque année en vendant du biodiésel.

Les eaux restantes, près de 90 % du volume à l'entrée du procédé, seraient par la suite filtrées dans des bassins contenant des algues. Les algues capteraient le phosphore. Au terme de ce processus de filtration, les eaux seraient finalement envoyées dans les égouts de la ville ou directement dans la nature. Quant aux algues, elles seraient réintroduites dans le processus.

Voyages d'exploration

L'idée d'une telle usine est venue à M. Boulay après deux voyages d'exploration en Europe, notamment au Danemark, un des plus importants producteurs de porc au monde. M. Boulay cherchait des solutions pour gérer son excédent de lisier. Son entreprise produit 100 000 porcs chaque année. Elle possède juste assez de terres **agricoles** pour épandre la moitié du lisier, soit 50 000 tonnes cubes. Tout l'excédent doit être exporté vers des terres **agricoles** situées dans d'autres municipalités puisque celles dans les environs sont en surplus de phosphore. L'exportation du lisier coûte entre 8 \$ et 10 \$ la tonne, une fortune, note-t-il.

Le parc industriel de Saint-Césaire serait un très bon site pour accueillir une usine de méthanisation du lisier, estime Yvon Boucher, président du Club **Agri-Durable**. L'ancien maire de Saint-Césaire signale que l'endroit est accessible par plusieurs routes, est proche des producteurs et se trouve à proximité d'installations de transport d'Hydro-Québec. Des entreprises situées dans le parc industriel pourraient par ailleurs utiliser la chaleur dégagée par le brûlage du gaz méthane, fait remarquer M. Boucher. Cela augmenterait les **revenus** de l'usine.

L'industrie porcine a mauvaise presse au Québec en raison des problèmes causés à l'environnement, fait valoir M. Boucher. Un tel projet aurait des retombées positives sur le bilan vert des producteurs. "On veut faire un projet en faisant la roue complète; gérer le lisier, mais aller plus loin en produisant de l'électricité. Un projet comme ça, c'est l'avenir."

Partenaires et financement

L'étude de faisabilité en poche, M. Boulay et le Club **Agri-Durable** recruteront maintenant des producteurs de porcs intéressés à prendre une part active dans le projet. Le groupe explorera ensuite les possibilités de financement. Le projet serait admissible à de subventions liées à la production d'énergie renouvelable, de l'avis du comptable Galvin.

Le projet pourrait voir le jour d'ici deux ans, pense M. Boulay.

mlaliber@lavoixdelest.qc.ca

Un rapport démagogique

PUBLICATION: La Presse
DATE: 2009.11.27
SECTION: Forum
PAGE: A23
COLUMN: Réplique

Dans sa chronique, Claude Picher salue le "courage" du

Conference Board qui, dit-il, ose remettre en question la **gestion de l'offre** dans le lait au Canada, au risque de se faire "clouer au pilori par le puissant lobby des **producteurs** laitiers". Comme si la réputée filiale du puissant Conference Board américain, financé par les plus grandes entreprises multinationales de la planète, avait quoi que ce soit à craindre des agriculteurs.

Le Conference Board prétend que la **gestion de l'offre** procure aux **producteurs** de lait des revenus exagérément élevés. Soixante-quatre pour cent des **producteurs** laitiers ont des revenus supérieurs à 250 000\$, rapporte l'organisme pour appuyer ses dires. Il s'agit en fait des revenus d'exploitation totaux de la ferme. Une fois les dépenses et les amortissements déduits, il ne reste que 35 000\$ au **producteur** laitier moyen. C'est loin d'être abusif pour des gens qui doivent traire les vaches sept jours sur sept, à longueur d'année.

Ensuite, le Conference Board écrit que les Canadiens paient leur litre de lait 64 ¢ plus cher que les Australiens. Pour arriver à cet écart, il compare le litre de lait entier au Canada (le format le plus cher ici) au prix moyen du deux litres (ramené au litre) de deux villes australiennes. Mais si on compare du comparable, l'écart disparaît. L'Australian Bureau of Statistics publie le prix moyen du deux litres de lait des capitales des huit États du pays. Selon les dernières données disponibles, il se vend là-bas 10 ¢ plus cher qu'au Québec. Quant à l'indice du prix des produits laitiers, il a augmenté de 36,2% au Canada, contre 39,6% aux États-Unis et... 53% en Australie de 1998 à 2008. Comment le Conference Board

explique-t-il ces résultats, alors qu'on a complètement déréglementé la **production** en 2000 en Australie, ce qui a fait chuter le prix aux agriculteurs de 36%?

La réponse est simple. Les agriculteurs, lorsqu'ils ne sont pas organisés, sont des preneurs de prix, sans pouvoir faire face aux acheteurs. Les intermédiaires en profitent pour accroître leur marge, sans bénéfice pour les consommateurs. C'était vrai il y a 40 ans, au moment de la mise en place de la **gestion de l'offre**. C'est toujours vrai.

Aux États-Unis, c'est plus de 1 milliard de dollars d'aide supplémentaire aux **producteurs** de lait qui a été annoncée pour 2009 afin de pallier la crise, en plus des dépenses déjà prévues par le Farm Bill (300 milliards pour cinq ans) et par les États américains. Au Canada, grâce à la **gestion de l'offre**, la ferme laitière familiale tire un revenu stable du marché, sans subvention gouvernementale. Le citoyen canadien n'est pas taxé pour la soutenir et les prix des produits laitiers sont stables et raisonnables.

Les crises alimentaires, agricoles, environnementales et économiques actuelles prennent leur origine dans le libéralisme économique débridé. Il est regrettable que le Conference Board n'ait pas su en tirer les leçons et s'en prenne de manière démagogique à la **gestion de l'offre**, alors que ses mérites sont de plus en plus reconnus dans le monde.

Marcel Groleau

L'auteur est président de la Fédération des **producteurs** de lait du Québec. Il réplique à la chronique "L'arnaque du lait" de Claude Picher, publiée le 24 novembre.

Funding for nursery landscape & greenhouse vegetable production (Hanna Herald , 23)

PUBLICATION: Hanna Herald

DATE: 2009.11.18

EDITION: Final

SECTION: News

PAGE: 23

WORD COUNT: 295

In order to assist farmers in the marketing of crops and livestock, Agriculture and **Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)** initiated the Advance Payment Program (APP) as a financial loan guarantee that provides easier access to credit through cash advances. This means improved cash flow throughout the year, since producers are able to meet their financial obligations and benefit from the best market conditions. In addition, the cost to farmers is usually less than alternative market funding.

The highlights of the APP program include the first \$100,000 being interest-free, with a maximum total cash advance of \$400,000 in any given crop year. Any monies loaned over and above the interest-free portion bears an interest rate of bank prime. Therefore, significant savings can accrue for the producer, since the loan is well below market interest rates.

Also of advantage to producers is the relatively simple and straight-forward application process. There are some caveats attached to the APP program, such as maximizing the cash advance at the lesser of the government portion of a producer's CAIS/ Agristability reference margin (66.5 per cent X reference margin) or a producer's specific amount based on the number of units to be sold. In addition, farmers must repay their loans as the agricultural product is sold, and they must be able to demonstrate that there was an actual sale of the product.

The APP program is now available for Alberta producers. Applications became available in October, 2009 and must be postmarked by February 28, 2010. The APP Program for Alberta producers is administered by ACC Farmers' Financial, and more information can be found on the ACC website at www.accfarmersfinancial.ca or call ACC toll-free at 1-888-278-8807.

Prep–Agriculture–Report (bnw)

DATE: 2009.11.26
KEYWORDS: AGRICULTURE
PUBLICATION: bnw
WORD COUNT: 221

(WTO–Agriculture)

Progress on a World Trade Organization deal will be the focus for government leaders from around the world next week.

A ministerial meeting begins Monday in Geneva.

Some farm organizations, including the Canadian Wheat Board and the National Farmers Union, have expressed concern about the state of negotiations.

They worry Canada could potentially lose the wheat board and the **supply management** system for eggs, poultry and dairy **products**.

The federal government's commitment to **supply management** has been questioned.

Several M–Ps, in committee, voted against a motion that would have forced Canadian negotiators to walk away from a deal if it included forfeiting the wheat board and the **supply management** system. (CHSM)

(Prairies–Harvest)

Harvest is basically done across Western Canada.

Bruce Burnett with the Canadian Wheat Board says the final 10 to 15 per cent of the crop has come off in the last few weeks.

He says there are still a few pockets where grain has not yet been harvested, particularly in the northeastern growing areas of Saskatchewan.

Despite dragging into mid–November, Burnett says the harvest has surpassed expectations in quality and quantity.

He adds the extended fall has been good for winter wheat sown this fall, although the lateness affected the number of acres planted.

He estimates winter wheat acres are down 10 to 15 per cent from last year. (CHSM)

(Lentils)

A bright spot in **agriculture** these days is the lentil market.

Toby Torkelson with Rayglen Commodities in Saskatchewan says processing plants are running at 100 per cent capacity and are well–booked in advance.

Higher prices are being powered by significant demand from India.

Jeff Jackson of Wigmore Farms, also in Saskatchewan, says the monsoon season has been less than spectacular with moisture levels down about 20 per cent.

India has started a tendering program and Jackson says Canada is the only supplier of green lentils for the world. (CJWW)

(**Agriculture** Digest by Irv Thomas)

(The Canadian Press)

Pork industry eyes better times

PUBLICATION: Red Deer Advocate

DATE: 2009.11.26

SECTION: Central Alberta Life

PAGE: X6

Alberta's beleaguered pork producers are looking ahead to better times, says the head of an industry association after a series of meetings across the province.

«To their credit, producers have done a good job of keeping focused on the need to build for the future as they continue to manage the incredible difficulties they face,» said Herman Simons, a Tees-area producer and chairman of Alberta Pork, in a news release.

«No matter how bad things get we find ways to make things work.

«We're resilient, we're innovative and we will do whatever it takes to make something out of this difficult situation.»

Simons was speaking following regional meetings last week that saw pork producers gather in Grande Prairie, Fort Saskatchewan, Lethbridge and Red Deer.

He said the industry has been hurt by the H1N1 flu and other economic factors, but the clearest message from the past year has been the **importance** of developing the domestic market. And that's something the Alberta **Pork** revitalization strategy will address, said Simons.

Stuart McKie, a policy specialist with Alberta Pork, said the revitalization strategy is concentrating on the development of a verified production quality platform to differentiate Alberta-produced pork, marketing to create brand demand, and investigation of the investment necessary to build the necessary infrastructure.

Substantial progress has already been made in all areas, said McKie. A description of the revitalization strategy will be provided at Alberta Pork's annual general meeting in Edmonton Dec. 9 and 10.

Regional directors for the coming year were elected at the regional meetings, with Simons and John Middel of Rocky Mountain House chosen to represent the central region.

A new chairman and vice-chairman for Alberta Pork will be selected at the AGM.

Conference Board critical; dairy industry bristles

November 26, 2009

Better Farming

By Susan Mann

November 26, 2009

Supply management prevents dairy producers from competing in new markets for milk products, says Conference Board of Canada report; why should farmers compete for prices that don't meet costs of production, counters industry

A Conference Board of Canada report concludes Canada's dairy supply managed system limits its competitiveness but a Canadian dairy industry spokesperson says the system is preferable to competing in uncertain export markets.

"The world dairy market has just seen the biggest decrease in the price of milk ever," says Therese Beaulieu of Dairy Farmers of Canada.

Beaulieu says the report, released Nov. 23 by the non-profit economic, public policy and labour think-tank, rehashes arguments and propaganda made previously by other detractors of Canada's supply management system.

In a press release, Conference Board senior vice-president Glen Hodgson says supply management largely meets its stated goal of improving producer incomes. "But it also prevents milk producers from capitalizing on opportunities in global markets, while thwarting Canada's international trade objectives and reducing competitiveness and innovation."

Beaulieu says the report "ignores the fact that without regulations protecting the small player or provider of raw material in any supply chain, the primary producer is left holding the small end of the stick." Perfect competition exists only in theory, she adds.

Peter Gould, Dairy Farmers of Ontario general manager, says compared to many other agricultural sectors, dairy is healthy while the others are experiencing "dire straights."

Report author Danielle Goldfarb says the report contains a lot of information that's new for those outside the system.

In doing the report, the Board's goal was to analyze how the system works. Goldfarb says dairy farmers understand the inner workings of supply management, but lots of Canadians, including many policy makers, don't.

The Board also wanted to examine the system in light of new opportunities for the industry.

The Board plans to do further research on supply management, including analyzing if the system should be abandoned and if any possible alternatives exist.

Goldfarb says it's understandable that dairy farmers want to defend the system. "It's clearly boosted their incomes and profits above what they would otherwise be."

It's remarkable the system, introduced in the 1970s, still exists given all the complicated things that must be done to keep supply management functioning, such as price setting, matching production with demand, quota allocation and import restrictions, Goldfarb notes.

One lost farmer opportunity outlined in the report is the ability to seize global opportunities in places like China and India where dairy demand is expected to continue its long-term growth, especially among the middle classes.

“Canada’s higher-price system limits its competitiveness in these emerging markets,” the report states.

Beaulieu questions what export opportunities there are currently.

A study released this summer by the International Farm Comparison Network found that only two per cent of world milk produced could achieve costs of production if sold at the summer world price of US\$20 per 100 litres. The study measured the cost of milk production in 46 countries. The Network is an organization of dairy researchers with a mission to create a better understanding of world milk production.

When farmers don’t have supply management they don’t have a say in the marketplace because they are price takers, Beaulieu says. Consumers don’t benefit because distributors and others holding market power don’t pass along any savings they get from cheaper raw materials.

Farm leaders question provincial and federal funding cut allegations

Better Farming

November 26, 2009

by GEOFF DALE

As political opponents in Queen's Park and Ottawa trade barbs on whether agricultural spending has been cut, farm leaders collaborate to elicit government support.

At the federal level, Liberal agriculture critic Wayne Easter points to recently released Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada performance report for 2008-2009. The report indicates agriculture program spending dropped to \$1.5-billion in 2008-09 from \$2.4-billion in 2007-08.

"When hog farmers were facing a crisis through no fault of their own, rather than aid them, this government turned their back on them," says Easter in a Nov. 17 news release. "\$1 billion could have helped farm families significantly in easing their struggles and transforming the industry for the future."

During the previous year Ottawa delivered about \$1-billion directly to farmers through Agri-Invest Kickstart and other initiatives; this year it has delivered \$1.4 billion in cash advances, Conservative Minister of Agriculture Gerry Ritz responds to Easter in a prepared statement for media. Record farm receipts in 2008 meant fewer demands for government assistance, he adds.

Calling the dispute a "political" issue at present, Canadian Pork Council spokesman Gary Stordy says he's not aware of funding cuts so far.

"Any type of reduction or loss of programs available to ag sectors is something that comes at a difficult time," Stordy says. "It is something we have to look into further."

Meanwhile in Queen's Park, Progressive Conservative agriculture critic Ernie Hardeman says public documents reveal discrepancies between the planned and actual amount of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' business risk management transfers.

In a Nov. 18 news release, Hardeman notes Ontario Estimates documents released with the 2008 budget documents indicated \$277,469,500 would be transferred. Public accounts documents released this fall say the Treasury Board reallocated \$82,600,000 of that sum.

The minister's communications advisor Kelly Synnott says the numbers do not represent a reduction but simply the difference between government estimates and public accounts: "The nature of our programs are demand driven so in any given year we set aside a certain amount of money, so it's there if needed."

Ontario Federation of Agriculture president Bette Jean Crews says she has no concrete information on an \$82-million shortfall in provincial agricultural risk management funding. "I've heard the talk and hallway chatter but we have no breakdown on that figure."

Crews, who is working on the united message coalition with pork, beef, horticulture, veal and grains and oilseeds producers, says "if support is being withdrawn or not taken up, that means the program wasn't designed right and that's where we need more input."

That's where the coalition will come in, she adds.

Ontario Cattlemen's Association executive director Dave Stewart says he doesn't have information on the topic but may know more following a meeting with Hardeman this week.

Calling it "speculative at best" to answer questions on how and where shortfalls would hurt the industry, Ontario Pork's director of communications Keith Robbins notes that "if there is no cash that makes it harder for us to find locations to source dollars."

The coalition is showing that agriculture plays a significant role in the provincial economy, he says, adding every primary producer creates seven jobs. "There is a huge economic spin-off from agriculture for the economy in general."

WTO shoptalk next week, but Doha backdrop stays

The Economic Times
November 27, 2009

Trade ministers from 143 countries are meeting in Geneva on Monday to discuss ways to improve the functioning of the WTO. The director general of the world trade body, Pascal Lamy, is hopeful that members would 'exchange ideas' on how to conclude the elusive Doha Round by next year.

In an exclusive e-mail interaction with ET, Mr Lamy talks about where the Doha negotiations—launched eight years ago—stand and the road ahead. Excerpts:

The WTO ministerial next week is more about the functioning of the WTO than the ongoing Doha Round. What do you seek to achieve there?

The theme for the seventh ministerial conference is — the WTO, the multilateral trading system and the current global economic environment. There are two working sessions: one on the review of WTO activities, including the Doha work programme, and the other on the WTO's contribution to recovery, growth and development.

These formats are deliberately broad so that governments can discuss the issues of importance to them in all sessions. I'm quite certain that the Doha Round will be discussed in all the sessions.

This was never intended to be a negotiating session, but the ministers can send out very strong signals of support for concluding the Round next year and perhaps exchange some ideas on how we can accomplish this. I would also expect a lot of 'behind-the-scenes' talks and discussions among ministers.

India and the United States are seen as being at the forefront of a number of contentious issues that are holding up the talks. Could the two countries play a greater role than the others in speeding up the negotiations?

Both are important players in our work, but there are others as well. It has often been reported in the press that the breakdown we suffered in July 2008 was the result of disagreements between India and the United States. It's true that the two were on different sides in agriculture and industrial market access, but there were other countries supporting each of them.

Moreover, on the issue of trade in services there is much in common for the two countries. This said, of course, there is more the two of them can do to accelerate the negotiations. India recently sent a strong signal in that regard with the convening of a key ministerial gathering in Delhi.

There were issues both in agriculture and industrial goods (Nama) that were identified as the deal breakers in July last year. When do you expect some movement in these areas?

We have seen engagement and progress at the technical level on both issues. But the problem is that they are not yet moving fast enough for the Doha Round to be concluded in 2010. The question is, how can the pace be accelerated. I expect that we will see the breakthrough when key players have enough confidence in each other to go to the end game, show their final cards and reveal what it is they vitally need and what it is that they really cannot accept. We should be getting soon to that stage.

If the deal is to be sealed by 2010, when would be the time to draw a road map?

We have been operating via a road map since the September meeting of ministers in New Delhi. We have senior officials here in Geneva meeting intensively this week and they will come again in mid-December. Before the year ends, we should have a clearer view of what lies ahead in 2010.

Members of the G-20 and more recently at the APEC summit have committed to taking stock in the early part of 2010 to see what the prospects are of achieving the target date they have set for themselves to conclude the Round next year.

At this point of time, is it possible to predict the timing of a ministerial conference on the Doha Round?

No, but perhaps we will have greater clarity in the next few months.

Is there a possibility of a 'Lamy draft' being introduced at any point of time?

I have always worked under the principle of 'no surprises'. So the WTO members know that I will certainly not drop a text from heaven. The model we have worked with is to produce draft texts following a bottom-up process of engagement by members. Today I see little reason to put this model at risk.

How important a role would small group discussions play in these negotiations?

Small group discussions play an important part in every negotiation. Decisions are only taken by the full 153 members. The WTO has no board or directory which decides for the entire membership. But it is clear that these decisions need to be prepared in smaller groups and often bilaterally.

This concentric circle approach is complex and time-consuming but it's the only way I know to reach consensus. And consensus is a solid base for legitimacy.

Meat haulers will no longer be notified of inspections

Today's Trucking
November 26, 2009

OTTAWA - A few days after New Years, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) will stop providing 72-hour advance notification of inspection of US meat imports.

Drivers will be selected and advised upon arrival at the border that their meat shipment has been selected for CFIA inspection, reports the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

Prior to arrival at the border, importers and brokers are to ensure that selected carriers are aware of the location of the pre-selected meat inspection facility where the driver is to report to.

The driver will be notified by a CBSA officer and the documents will be stamped with a "Report for Meat Inspection" stamp.

Upon arrival, the shipment should have already been customs released by the Border Services Officer indicated via the usual customs stamp.

Drivers should be keenly aware, though, that a stamp is still required at the border, and in some cases there may be two -- the second one indicating that the shipment must go for inspection.

CBSA is looking into the possibility of notifying carriers via RNS when the shipment is selected for CFIA inspection.

CCA Confident In COOL Dispute

Golden West

Thursday, 26 November 2009

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association is confident in Canada's case against U.S. country of origin labelling at the World Trade Organization.

The CCA says Canadian cattle producers have lost over 250 million dollars since COOL came into effect over a year ago.

John Masswohl, director of government and international relations, says they were left no other option.

He says they made many trips to Washington but there was no interest from U.S. lawmakers to resolve the issue with one-on-one negotiations.

Exports of finished cattle from Canada to the U.S. are down around 20 percent, while feeder cattle exports are down over 50 percent.

The WTO is in the process of establishing a dispute settlement panel to rule on the American labelling law.

CFC Looks Ahead To WTO Meeting

Golden West

Thursday, 26 November 2009

Progress on a World Trade Organization deal will be the focus for government leaders from around the world next week.

A ministerial meeting begins Monday in Geneva.

Some farm organizations, including the Canadian Wheat Board and the National Farmers Union, have expressed concern about the state of negotiations as Canada could potentially lose the CWB and the supply management system for eggs, poultry and dairy products.

The Conservatives' commitment to supply management has been questioned after several MPs, in committee, voted against a motion that would have forced Canadian negotiators to walk away from a deal if it included forfeiting the Canadian Wheat Board and the supply management system.

Chicken Farmers of Canada chair David Fuller says they believe the government will continue to take a strong stance, ensuring supply management will be solid after this round of negotiations.

He says it would be unwise to forfeit supply management as supply managed industries are, by far, the most stable sectors in Canadian agriculture.

Fuller says he doesn't anticipate any real negotiations next week, as the meeting has been downplayed as just a chance to update ministers on where talks are at.

Prairie Post

Farm News East, Friday, November 27, 2009, p. B4

Government of Canada invests in pulse industry

Ryan Dahlman

Saskatchewan

The Government of Canada is investing over \$4.4 million to increase profitability for Canadian pulse growers. The four projects that make up this investment will help drive the Canadian economy and deliver real benefits to Canadian farmers.

"Canadian farmers grow and export more pulses than anyone else in the world," said Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "Canada's Economic Action Plan will help them build their business for the future while creating a more profitable industry and a stronger economy."

This federal investment will support four new projects administered by Pulse Canada:

Through the AgriFlexibility fund, part of Canada's Economic Action Plan:

Up to \$1.5 million for the Marketing the Sustainability of Canadian Agriculture project, to potentially capture premium prices by marketing Canadian pulse products as environmentally friendly;

Up to \$1.5 million for the Pulse Health, Innovation and Commercialization project to create and capture new opportunities for Canadian pulses in the growing markets for healthy and sustainable food; and

Up to \$1.13 million for the Canadian Pulse industry Transportation Initiative to give the pulse and speciality crops industry better access to equipment and make more efficient and reliable transportation systems.

Through the AgriMarketing program, up to \$308,250 will be provided to help create new opportunities for pulse farmers by promoting pulses as important in health and environmentally-conscious markets world-wide.

Funding is subject to the projects meeting all eligibility requirements and the signing of contribution agreements.

For more information on Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) programs visit www.agr.gc.ca.

For more information on Canada's Economic Action Plan, visit www.actionplan.gc.ca.

Prairie Post

Farm News East, Friday, November 27, 2009, p. B5

WTO draft threatens rights of prairie farmers

Larry Hill

OPINION

Talks have dragged on so long it's tempting to think there won't ever be a new World Trade Organization deal. But bit by bit, the elements of a final agreement are being assembled in Geneva. Once something gets into a draft, it can be very hard to get it out.

If the current draft goes through, western Canadian farmers will not only lose valuable government guarantees of our wheat and barley payments. We'll also lose the right to choose our marketing structure for wheat and barley.

The current draft specifically singles out and targets western Canadian farmers' single desk for wheat and barley. The Canadian Wheat Board as it is today would cease to exist by 2013 - without western Canadian farmers having had any say in the matter.

This is in addition to costly concessions Canada has already made - costly to western Canadian farmers, that is. In 2004, Canada agreed to give up farmers' financial guarantees on CWB initial payments and CWB borrowings. They're not gone yet, but they will be whenever a WTO deal is reached and ratified.

The loss of government guarantees of initial payments means that farmers will no longer have the safety net of a floor price for those rare occasions when the bottom falls out of the market. The loss of government guarantees on CWB borrowings means that the CWB's financing costs will go up. That means farmers costs will go up as well - and our net financial returns per bushel will go down.

Why is the WTO interested in our marketing structure? It's a good question.

It might make sense if the CWB were actually "trade-distorting". After all, the whole point of the WTO is supposed to be to reduce tariffs and subsidies that distort trade. But the CWB is not trade-distorting. Fourteen consecutive international trade rulings - all initiated by the United States - have confirmed this. One of them is a 2004 WTO panel decision. In other words, the CWB shouldn't even be on the table.

Whether it should be or not, however, it is.

The WTO refers to the CWB as a State Trading Enterprise or STE. There are many other organizations in the developed world that function like STEs, and they account for a greater share of world trade in their respective agricultural products than the CWB does in wheat and barley. However, the only other developed-world STE that the WTO formally recognizes is New Zealand's single desk for kiwi sales, Zespri. Zespri has been exempted from the proposed regulations concerning STEs - by former WTO agriculture chair Crawford Falconer of New Zealand.

Meanwhile, U.S. and EU domestic subsidies continue at high levels. In 2008, the U.S. implemented a \$289-billion Farm Bill, which increased domestic support for wheat and barley. The U.S. Loan Deficiency Program is currently paying American farmers up to \$1.53 per bushel of durum. The draft text does not require elimination of these programs.

Any negotiation is supposed to be about give and take. You give up something, and you get something in return. What will Prairie wheat and barley producers get in return for giving up their financial guarantees on initial payments and CWB borrowings?

Not much. The latest WTO draft contains a formula which is supposed to improve market access by reducing tariff levels. The problem is that it reduces "bound" or maximum allowable tariffs, not tariffs that are actually being applied. In fact, the current draft offers no significant gains in terms of market access for western Canadian wheat and barley producers. Check out the details on the CWB Web site under Hot Topics > Trade issues > WTO and market access. In every one of the CWB's major markets for 2007-08, the proposed new "bound" tariffs are in fact higher than the tariffs actually being applied in these markets. In other words, there's no benefit for wheat farmers.

The latest draft does eliminate export subsidies. That's good as far as it goes, but export subsidies are rarely used for wheat these days. As well, some progress has been made in addressing the export-subsidy aspects of the export credit and food aid sections of the text, but exceptions remain. Predictably, they favour the U.S.

As western Canadian farmers, the question we need to ask ourselves is whether this is the deal we want. If not, we need to insist that the Government of Canada speak up on our behalf. The government's stated position is a good one - that decisions regarding the CWB marketing structure "should be made in Canada and not by our international trading partners." As a western Canadian farmer, I appreciate this. We deserve the right to decide the future of our marketing organization. However, a stated position benefits us only if it's stated forcefully where it counts - at the WTO.

Western Canadian farmers need a WTO deal that provides meaningful reduction in tariffs for wheat and barley and an end to trade-distorting practices prevalent in the U.S. and EU. We don't need a deal that will increase our financing costs and deny us the right choose our own (non-trade-distorting) marketing structure for wheat and barley.

The next WTO meeting of trade ministers is scheduled for November 30 to December 2 in Geneva. Now is the time for the Government of Canada to speak up for western Canadian farmers at the WTO. Now is the time for farmers to ensure our elected representatives understand what's at stake.

Larry Hill is chair of the CWB farmer-controlled board of directors. He farms near Swift Current

Prairie Post

Farm News East, Friday, November 27, 2009, p. B6

WRAP lobbying will continue

By Ric Swihart

Alberta

Lobbying has its detractors in some circles, but it works.

If politicians are lobbied, they listen, says Humphrey Banack of Round Hill, president of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers (WRAP).

"They want people to remember the things they do right," he told 20 producers at the WRAP Region 14 annual meeting last week. "They are affected by lobbyists."

Banack said Gerry Ritz has said publicly he will defend the single desk Canadian Wheat Board.

It is up to farmers to make sure he sticks to what he has said in the House of Commons and outside of the Commons.

"Let him know he has said it and make him stick to it," said Banack.

Larry Hill of Swift Current, District 3 southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan wheat board director and chairman of the wheat board, said the fate of the single desk is a little confusing.

Hill said you have to listen carefully to Ritz. He is saying the decision on the wheat board should be made in Canada. The wheat board is saying the decision should be made by western grain farmers. There is a difference.

Hill said the Liberals always said they would protect the wheat board at all costs. Then farmers woke up one day and then trade minister Peterson announced he gave up the wheat board in world trade talks with the United States.

"The American negotiator simply outfoxed the Canadian negotiator," said Hill.

The wheat board has a lobby vehicle, although new federal rules announced this week make it illegal for such groups to hire a consultant lobbyist.

The wheat board's political voice is a card available from the board to fill in and mail to politicians.

Merv Cradduck information on the potential fate of the wheat board or what producers should do to try to protect it can be found in WRAP publications and at Grain Matters published by the wheat board.

There are a lot people who are anti-board, said Cradduck.

"Even you who are into dual marketing or even pro-board, you have concerns," he said. "Leave that decision up to western grain farmers."

© 2009 Prairie Post. All rights reserved.