

#AGFO - The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry

MARKET ACCESS: GIVING CANADIAN FARMERS AND PROCESSORS THE WORLD

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Trade tumult underlines importance to Canadian farmers of foreign market access

Canada's farmers and food producers are eager to go to the international market. A little help from the federal government could mean the world to them.

International trade has grown increasingly complex and fraught with regulatory and other changes.

Despite these challenges, it is all the more important for Canadian farmers to have secure access to foreign markets and to expand the reach of Canadian food products. The continued health of the country's agriculture and agri-food sector depends on this.

In October 2014, the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry began studying the agriculture and agri-food sector's ability to tap into export markets and limitations that prevent them from doing so.

After over two years of study and consultations with approximately 500 witnesses and other stakeholders, the committee's report, *Market Access: Giving Canadian Farmers and Processors the World*, offers the federal government advice on what it can do to help the sector thrive.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The report includes **18 recommendations** about how to strengthen Canadian farmers' competitiveness by opening up new foreign markets for their products.

The committee recommends that the federal government eliminate non-tariff barriers to trade and pursue free trade agreements with other countries to expand market access for Canadian food products.

Members also recommend that the government work with its international partners to develop a streamlined dispute resolution process at the World Trade Organization that would be more efficient and less costly.

In addition, the committee made recommendations to make Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector more productive and competitive.

The committee urges the government to improve access to infrastructure grants for farmers and food producers who want to invest in new technologies and to improve the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to address a labour shortage that continues to hurt productivity.

NEXT STEPS

The Senate committee is offering the government an ambitious plan that will allow Canada's farmers and food producers to feed the world while providing stability and creating jobs for a crucial sector of the Canadian economy.

There are countless opportunities for Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector to flourish in an open global market. The federal government can play a productive and meaningful role by opening the door for them and giving them the world.

The committee urges the government to do so.

Senators will continue to support Canada's farmers and food producers.



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READ THE REPORT

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