



Canadian
Chamber of
Commerce

Chambre de
Commerce
du Canada

Because
Business
Matters.

Parce que les
affaires sont
importantes.

November 08, 2021

Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Sent via email: marie-claude.bibeau@parl.gc.ca

cc: Provincial/Territorial Agriculture Ministers

Dear Ministers:

We are writing to you on behalf of thousands of businesses of all sizes in the agriculture and agri-food sector ahead of the scheduled Agriculture Ministers' meeting. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic placing stress on the food system, the Canadian agriculture and agri-food supply chain has remained resilient and will be a driver of Canada's economic recovery.

From producers to processors to manufacturers and beyond, Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector plays a quiet yet significant role in Canada's economy, accounting for approximately 2.3 million jobs and \$143 billion, or 7%, to Canada's GDP. The people in this industry work tirelessly every day to ensure that our country meets its economic and environmental policy objectives. Nevertheless, some barriers to attaining those objectives remain.

As you know, the federal government's Economic Strategy Tables initiated a new collaborative model between government and industry in six key sectors, including agriculture and agri-food. Specifically, the 2018 report established ambitious objectives of increasing Canada's domestic sales to \$140 billion, and exports to \$85 billion, by 2025. The government's Industry Strategy Council and industry players are aligned in recognizing the sector as critical to our country. Businesses in the agriculture sector continue to demonstrate leadership in environmental sustainability through improved fuel/carbon efficiency, the use of carbon capture technologies, renewable fuels, and other innovative techniques. However, achieving the ambitious 2030 and net-zero 2050 goals will require deeper collaboration.

Furthermore, pressures on agriculture supply chains have highlighted vulnerabilities in global trade logistics. For example, major increases in consumer demand have led to rising food prices and disruptions to international and domestic trade networks. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated not only the interconnected nature of Canada's agricultural supply chain, but also its vulnerability. Governments can lead in this area and support industry by facilitating a digital transition and highlighting the risks of disruptions to economic recovery. Continued cooperation and information-sharing among all levels of government can help the industry mitigate the impacts of supply chain disturbances.

As leaders in the agriculture and agri-food sector, we are writing to urge collaboration on issues that can help the industry meet the objectives established by the federal government.

1) **Work to develop and grow Canada's value-added and food production sectors.**

Initiatives like value-added processing and food production represent a path to prosperity for the Canadian agriculture sector. In addition, rural broadband and smart farming technologies will lead to better data collection and carbon capture capabilities. These innovations along the value chain help ensure access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food. Furthermore, they lead to job growth for growers, processors, retailers, and everyone in between.

2) **Work with industry to meet Canada's environmental objectives.** Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector is among the greenest in the world, contributing to just over 8% of Canada's overall domestic emissions, compared to a global average of 23%. Projects such as the 4R Nutrient Stewardship program and carbon sequestration have demonstrated the sector's leadership and commitment to the fight against climate change. We urge the federal government to work with industry to implement a GHG emissions reductions strategy that includes investments along the entirety of the value chain from production to ingredient processing and food production to create jobs, promote innovation, and facilitate a business-friendly investment environment. We also urge sustained collaboration on the development of a National Sustainability Index for the sector.

3) **Commit to a science-based regulatory environment that increases our global economic competitiveness.** We call on the federal government to commit to an approach to regulation that is transparent, evidence-based, and facilitates the meeting of our export-based objectives. Doing so will require significant collaboration with industry, other orders of government, and other federal departments and will strengthen Canada's food systems at home and abroad.

We hope that you will find these recommendations constructive. Industry stands ready to actively partner with the federal government and champion our agriculture success stories, both economic and environmental.

Sincerely,

Honourable Perrin Beatty, P.C., O.C.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Al Driver
Country Division Head
Bayer CropScience Inc.

Mark Thompson
Executive Vice President, Chief Strategy and
Sustainability Officer
Nutrien

W.L. (Bill) Greuel
Chief Executive Officer
Protein Industries Canada

Sebastien Labbe
Vice President, Bulk, Sales and Marketing
Canadian National Railway

Pierre Petelle
President and Chief Executive Officer
CropLife Canada

Karen Proud
President and Chief Executive Officer
Fertilizer Canada

Christian Buhagiar
President and Chief Executive Officer
Supply Chain Canada

Christina Stroud
Head, Corporate Affairs Canada
Syngenta Canada

Simon Jolette-Riopel
General Manager
Timac Agro Canada