

Ottawa Journal: Expanding Canadian Beef Markets

By David Tilson, M.P.

Dufferin-Caledon

Canadian beef is widely known, within Canada and abroad, for its superior quality.

Here in Dufferin-Caledon, we're proud to have many beef producers and farms throughout the riding, making significant contributions to both the local and national economies.

The federal government has a responsibility to support Canadian beef producers in exporting their product globally.

During the North American Leaders' Summit held in late June, Mexico agreed to open its borders to Canadian beef products by October.

This announcement builds on the previous Conservative government's work to open new markets for Canadian producers.

According to the Canadian Cattleman's Association's (CCA) website (www.cattle.ca/resources/industry-stats/), Canada is one of the largest exporters of red meat and livestock in the world and produces approximately 1.2 million tonnes of beef annually.

Furthermore, the Canadian beef industry contributes \$33 billion worth of sales of goods and services either directly or indirectly to the Canadian economy, as stated on the CCA's website.

This is an immense contribution, which creates thousands of jobs for Canadians.

Mexico had previously banned all imports of Canadian cattle and beef after the 2003 outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Before the North American Leaders' Summit held in late June, Mexico did not allow Canadian imports of cattle or beef from cattle over 30 months of age.

The concerns Mexico had expressed were addressed and resolved.

The Canadian beef industry produces the safest and best quality beef in the world, which has created a growing demand for Canadian beef from consumers around the world.

Canada's hard-working beef producers and processors are dedicated to creating a quality product that is backed up by a stringent and effective regulatory regime.

Mexico's geographic proximity to Canada, as well as its growing beef market, offers valuable economic opportunities for both countries, making it Canada's third most important market.

The previous Conservative government worked hard to open new markets for Canadian producers and to produce sound, science-based policy for the trade of agricultural products.

For example, the previous Conservative government established market access for beef to Ukraine in July 2015.

Canada exported \$35.5 million worth of agriculture and agri-food, and seafood products to Ukraine in 2014.

Mexico deserves to enjoy the best tasting and highest quality beef in the world that is produced by our very own Canadian farmers and ranchers.

I'm pleased that our previous Conservative government's work to see Mexico fully re-open its borders to Canadian beef has taken place following the North American Leaders' Summit.

Our dedicated and hard-working beef producers deserve our full support by working to open new markets for their products.

The previous Conservative government and current Opposition will continue to support Canada's beef producers.