

For immediate release

Canada-Peru free trade agreement welcome news for Canadian pulse and special crops industry

June 22, 2009 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Canadian pulse and special crops industry strongly supports a new free trade agreement between Canada and Peru. The Canada-Peru free trade agreement was ratified by the federal government last week and will ensure competitive access for Canadian pulses and special crops.

Peru is a significant and growing market for Canadian pulses and special crops. Canadian exports to Peru totaled nearly \$19 million in 2008, with the most significant exports being green lentils, green peas and canary seed. Pulses are Canada’s second largest agri-food export to Peru, behind only cereal grains.

“Peru is an important market for us,” says Barry Grabo, Chair of Pulse Canada. “This agreement will allow Canadian pulse exporters to remain competitive and take advantage of opportunities in this market.”

The new free trade agreement is welcome news to Canadian exporters who have been facing a tariff disadvantage in Peru compared to the U.S. A U.S.-Peru free trade agreement has been in place since February 1, 2009. That agreement has resulted in a 12 per cent tariff disadvantage for Canadian canary seed and a nine per cent disadvantage for Canadian pulses. The Canada-Peru agreement will immediately eliminate import duties for all pulses and special crops traded in significant volume.

“The Canada-Peru free trade agreement will put Canadian pulses and special crops back on a level playing field with the U.S. and ensure competitive access to Peru for the 2009 harvest,” says Gordon Bacon, Pulse Canada’s CEO. “When we visited Peru in May, importers stressed that without an agreement in place before the new crop harvest, Canadian market share in Peru would be significantly impacted.”

The Canadian pulse industry strongly advocates the pursuit of bilateral agreements to ensure that pulse exporters continue to have competitive access in all markets.

“While multilateral trade talks continue, the federal government has to ensure that Canadians remain competitive in markets where other exporters are signing bilateral agreements,” says Grabo. “The Peru-Canada trade agreement ensures that our exporters remain competitive and we look for the same access in Colombia, Dominican Republic and Morocco.”

Pulse Canada is the national association representing growers, traders and processors of Canadian pulse crops. Canada is the world’s largest supplier of pulses, with exports to more than 150 countries.

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