

Canada's pulse and special crops industry supports the Government's commitment to improve supply chain performance

May 16, 2017 (Winnipeg) –Pulse Canada and the Canadian Special Crops Association expect to see increased rail freight capacity and improved levels of service as a result of the legislative action plan introduced today by Transport Minister Marc Garneau.

Bill C49, *An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and other Acts respecting transportation...* was tabled today in Ottawa as part of the Transportation 2030 strategy to advance a more transparent, balanced, and efficient rail system.

“There is a lot to assess in this Bill and our team will do a thorough analysis of the details and will be prepared to participate in the Parliamentary process over the coming months” says Lee Moats, Chair of Pulse Canada. “In the end though, it’s about results. The true measure of success is the extent to which these provisions deliver measurable improvements in performance” says Moats.

The Act introduces reciprocal penalties into Service Level Agreements, replaces extended interswitching with a new “Long-haul interswitching” provision; provides clearer direction for the Canadian Transportation Agency to use inquiry powers on systemic or emerging rail freight issues; tightens timelines for the Canadian Transportation Agency to respond to shipper complaints; redefines adequate and suitable; and, makes changes to the Maximum Revenue Entitlement calculations.

“These changes will impact the agriculture sector for years to come and it is important that we take time as a sector to understand how they’re intended to work, to promote enhancements that will make them more effective, and work to ensure that the implementation of changes to the Act deliver the intended results” says Colin Topham, President of the Canadian Special Crops Association.

The Bill also proposes to remove containerized grain from the Maximum Revenue Entitlement (MRE) calculation, a move that could significantly impact the pulse and special crop sector which relies on intermodal movements to reach export markets. “As an industry we will look closely at this change to the MRE to understand both what the government intends as an outcome and the impact on our industry” says Gordon Bacon, CEO of Pulse Canada and the CSCA. “The industry expectation is that change must lead to improved containerized service, capacity and performance at competitive rates. Having clearly defined performance measures in place will be key to determining if the removal of container traffic from the MRE has achieved the intended results.”

The pulse and special crops industry is encouraged by the Bill’s focus on compelling more information on the performance of the rail system and overall railway transparency. “The right measures can both hold players accountable for their performance and ensure we know if we’re making progress towards our goals” says Moats. “Our sector has invested heavily in increasing the transparency of the system through the Ag Transport Coalition. We’re very much ready to contribute to the development of a broader system that meets the needs of individual participants, industries and Governments across Canada,” says Moats.

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

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