

**Pulse and Special Crops Industry Supports Government's Strategic Plan for the Future of Transportation in Canada**

November 4, 2016 (Winnipeg) – Pulse Canada and the Canadian Special Crops Association (CSCA) support the Government of Canada's long-term vision of a transportation system that is based on higher growth, increased competitiveness and better service.

Transport Minister Marc Garneau announced today that the Government will strengthen the ability to establish reciprocal penalties between shippers and railways in Service Level Agreements, better define adequate and suitable, improve access to the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA), improve the timelines on CTA decisions and address the future of the Maximum Revenue Entitlement and extended interswitching.

"Service level agreements, that promote balanced accountability, are a way to ensure that the railways' service obligations to the users of the system are made clear, and establish a commitment to address increasingly important extended interswitching provisions. Effective implementation of these particular elements are vital to the Canadian pulse and special crops industry," says Colin Topham, President of the CSCA. "It will be essential that the CTA is given the necessary power and authority to ensure these changes are effectively applied so pulse and special crop shippers can fully benefit from the predictable and effective rail service that drives export growth and access to international markets," says Topham.

Minister Garneau also signaled the Government's intent to address the Maximum Revenue Entitlement (MRE); a measure that is in place to ensure that grain freight rates are fair and just for farmers while providing an adequate return for railways.

"The pulse industry has made its views on the importance of the MRE known throughout the course of the Review of the Canada Transportation Act and in subsequent consultations with Minister Garneau and Minister MacAulay," says Lee Moats, Chair of Pulse Canada. A recent ruling of the CTA that will result in the exclusion of certain traffic destined for transload in the Vancouver Gateway from the MRE calculation highlights the need to ensure that legislative guidance is clear and supports the spirit and intent of important policy measures. "This recent CTA ruling is evidence that the Act needs to be addressed. We expect that the government's approach will be consistent with the message that Prime Minister Trudeau communicated in his mandate letters; that decisions and action will be informed by measurement, evidence and the views of Canadians and we've got some work to do to meet those criteria when it comes to the MRE," says Moats.

In that regard, the commitment to develop and implement a comprehensive data regime to support evidence based decision making by government and all stakeholders is welcome news to the pulse and special crops industry. "We agree that smart decisions require access to the best available information and we look forward to operating in an environment where evidence fuels the decision making process," says Moats.

"On the whole, the Government has identified the core issues that need to be addressed and we see opportunities to engage in the implementation plan. A great deal of consultation has been undertaken over the past 28 months; it's time to build on all of the efforts to date to improve system performance and sustain them into the future," says Topham.

*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.*

*The Canadian Special Crops Association is the national industry association representing processors and exporters of special crops in Canada. Canadian special crops include pulses – beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas – as well as buckwheat, sunflowers, mustard and canaryseed.*

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