

specific binding commitments on market access, domestic support and export competition are reflected in the schedules of each WTO Member. Canada strives to ensure that commitments negotiated during the Uruguay Round are fully implemented through our participation in the monitoring process of the WTO's Committee on Agriculture. This process will continue throughout 2002.

However, much still remains to be done. In the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture, WTO Members undertook to embark upon new multilateral agriculture negotiations in early 2000. Canada's initial negotiating position for these negotiations was announced in August 1999 by the Honourable Pierre Pettigrew, Minister for International Trade and the Honourable Lyle Vanclief, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. The fundamental features of the initial negotiating position are:

- eliminating all export subsidies as quickly as possible;
- maximum possible reduction or elimination in domestic support that distorts trade or production;
- real and substantial improvements in market access for all agriculture and food products; and
- securing new disciplines on export taxes and export restrictions.

The key themes underlying Canada's negotiating position are to: level the international playing field; secure greater market access for value-added products; develop clear, enforceable trade rules applying equally to all countries; and that decisions about production and marketing of Canadian products should continue to be made in Canada. This position is the result of extensive consultations with provinces and with Canada's agriculture and agri-food stakeholders.

These negotiations are under way in Geneva through special sessions of the WTO Committee on Agriculture. The work program for the first phase of the negotiations involved the submission of proposals on Members' negotiating objectives and Canada ensured that all elements of its initial negotiating position were presented in proposals. In the first phase, 125 of 142 WTO Members presented ideas. Phase two, which ended in February 2002, entailed in-depth work on all issues and options for policy reform that Members set out in their proposals during phase one. Canada elaborated how it seeks to achieve its objectives. The agriculture

negotiations are now continuing within the context of broadened multilateral negotiations, further to their November 2001 launch at the 4th WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar.

The Doha Declaration sets out an ambitious negotiating agenda on agriculture. Ministers have called for the agriculture negotiations to achieve fundamental reform through comprehensive negotiations aimed at: substantial improvements in market access; reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies; and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support. These are Canada's priorities in the negotiations and the Doha Declaration provides the scope for Canada to vigorously pursue its negotiating objectives for agriculture and enhances prospects for substantial and meaningful results.

Negotiations on agriculture are now proceeding in Committee on Agriculture Special Sessions reporting to the Trade Negotiation Committee. The work plan calls for the development of "modalities" (i.e. the draft framework for future rules and commitments) by March 2003. Other key benchmarks in the negotiations are: by the 5th WTO Ministerial, in 2003 — submission of offers (draft commitments); and January 1, 2005 — conclusion of the agriculture negotiations as part of the conclusion of the overall negotiating agenda agreed at Doha.

WTO Information Technology Agreement (ITA)

The World Trade Organization's Information Technology Agreement (ITA), signed in December 1996, required participants to eliminate customs duties and other duties and charges on a wide range of information technology (IT) products by 2000. Canada and 57 other countries — which together account for more than 93% of world trade in this sector — have joined the ITA. As a matter of course, we are asking that countries acceding to the WTO join the ITA, and a number have done so, including Estonia, Jordan, Latvia and now China. We will continue to push for further expanding the list of participants, particularly from Latin America, as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and other South American countries have not joined.

The ITA mandates further efforts to expand product coverage (ITA II). In that context, a list of possible additional products has been developed, based on members' proposals, but no agreement has been