

Supply

I think that about 40 per cent—give or take a couple of per cents—of all poultry products on the market today were not available just five years ago if they were produced at all. This goes to show that, owing to the vitality of that sector, product diversity was increased, products became more easily available to consumers and the needs of the consumers were better met. That is tomorrow's challenge, Mr. Speaker. When our log exports were frozen in 1985 or 1986, we ended up increasing our pork processing activities, therefore creating new jobs in this country to process the products, give them added value and export those products to the United States and to Japan. That is the kind of challenge facing our farm industry. I think that there is no two way about this. These are tomorrow's challenges. We should not delude ourselves in thinking that we can maintain the same farming system and keep our borders more or less closed forever. That is just not possible. We must use whatever means at our disposal—the quality of our products and of our workforce—to ensure we are capable of facing the challenges of the 21st century.

We will have no choice either but to support, in a creative way I might add, our Canadian agriculture where the marketing boards are very active on the domestic market. They too will have to adjust to new realities and, in many cases, to a shrinking market. To ensure our survival in that context, we will need high grade products and a greater sensitivity to market trends.

The point is, if only it could be conveyed to the entire nation, that the growth of our farm industry depends on the confidence the farm producers will have in their industry in the years to come, and their ability to adapt to new realities.

[English]

Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I was very interested to hear the minister's comments. I would like to ask the minister this. A couple years ago there was the *Growing Together* paper and a number of task forces were announced which were going to change the face of agriculture. To date we have had just one piece of legislation, that being the GRIP and NISA farm income. Farmers across the country are very concerned about what is happening next, in particular with respect to farm finance and transportation. I think those are two of the areas that have caused a lot of concern.

I am wondering if the minister can say when we can expect some legislation with respect to farm finance under the *Growing Together* task force report and with respect to transportation. Is it going to be coming soon? There is a piece of legislation that is before the House that is going to limit spending in this country by 3 per cent. I understand that GRIP and NISA legislation are exempt from that bill, but what effect will that piece of legislation have on any farm finance or transportation bills that will be coming forth?

Mr. Blais: First of all, I would say that those two programs, GRIP and NISA, were designed by the producers themselves. In agriculture we have the chance to have three, four or five meetings of ministers of agriculture every year. We are in touch all the time. We met in Kananaskis, Alberta and in Regina last year. In Kananaskis in July the ministers and the deputy ministers agreed to look at transportation. Not the federal government unilaterally, it is not working that way. We are working together.

We received information on that. Not everyone agrees on how we should address the situation. What we want is a real consensus from all parties. The pay to producer formula has been raised. We do not have an agreement from all parts. We have different opinions from all parts of Canada. What we are trying to find is one way to deal with the transportation situation to ensure that by doing something in one region of Canada we are not going to put pressure on another region, or resolve a problem in one area and create another problem in another area, in Ontario, Quebec or even Saskatchewan. Some provinces do not prefer the same approach for those problems.

What we have to do is get opinions from the provinces, from the producers, groups of producers and work together to find a final solution. The work that has been done by the task force was very good and very helpful. We are still working on that. On the finance side I would say that my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, will announce very good news for Saskatchewan today, but I will let my colleague—

An hon. member: It has been announced.

Mr. Blais: We have moved the headquarters of the FCC to Regina. That is good news for Saskatchewan.