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McKNIGHT TO REPRESENT CANADA AT CAIRNS GROUP MEETING OF AGRICULTURE-EXPORTING NATIONS

The Honourable Tom Hockin, Minister for International Trade, announced today that former Agriculture Minister Bill McKnight will attend a Cairns Group meeting on his behalf on October 17-18 in Geneva.

"This meeting of the Cairns Group is taking place at a critical juncture in the Uruguay Round negotiations," said Mr. Hockin. "We must send a strong and unified message that a substantial agreement on agriculture is absolutely essential to the overall world trade negotiations.

"The Cairns Group will continue to press all major Uruguay Round participants to work quickly and productively to reach an agreement in agriculture that is acceptable to all participants."

The Minister added that Canada remains committed to achieving a balanced agriculture package that will reduce trade-distorting subsidies, especially export subsidies; increase market access for Canadian exporters; and improve and strengthen global trade rules for agriculture, including the strengthening and clarifying of Article XI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in support of our supply-managed sectors.

The Cairns Group is made up of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Fiji, Hungary, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and Uruguay. This is the 13th meeting of the group, which was inaugurated in Cairns, Australia, in August 1986.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

Media Relations Office
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
(613) 995-1874