

UNITED STATES

- On December 4, 1998 Canada and the United States agreed to a wide range of measures to address longstanding issues in agricultural trade and to a schedule of high-level bilateral meetings designed to deal with issues of concern before they become irritants.
- On November 30, 1998 Canada and the United States agreed to the implementation of a nation-wide intransit preclearance program in Canada, which builds on the success of Open Skies. Under this initiative, all Canadian airports with existing U.S. preclearance facilities will be eligible for intransit preclearance services which will streamline processing of passengers travelling from Asia and Europe through Canada to the United States. Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal (Dorval) will be eligible for intransit preclearance in 1999. Calgary intends to follow in 2001. Edmonton, Ottawa and Winnipeg would be eligible after 2001.
- Canada and the United States have initiated compliance seminars, conducted in Canada by U.S. Customs and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in partnership with Canadian officials, to inform Canadian exporters of U.S. regulatory requirements.
- The state of Michigan agreed to delay full implementation of its Single Business Tax (SBT) broader application to Canadian companies. Consultations on the implementation of the SBT will take place in 1999 and include business communities from both sides of the border.
- Twice in 1998, and again on Feb 1, 1999, President Clinton exercised his discretion to suspend the right to bring action under the Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act (also known as the Helms-Burton Act) against current investors in property expropriated by the Cuban government.

MEXICO

- Implementation, on 1 August 1998, of a second round of accelerated tariff reductions covering some US\$1 billion in NAFTA trade including \$25 million in Canada-Mexico bilateral trade.

- Conclusion of a new agreement which allows for the resumption of Canadian seed potato exports to Mexico.
- Elimination of Mexico's phytosanitary permit requirements which had caused delays for imports of Canadian grains.
- New opportunities for Air Services between the two countries were created as a result of an agreement on code-sharing.

FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS

- In March 1998, Trade Ministers of the 34 participating countries issue a Joint Declaration outlining key objectives and principles for an FTAA.
- Nine negotiating groups and three consultative bodies created.
- Canada selected to chair the FTAA negotiations through the first 18 months. In this capacity, Canada chairs the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) of Chief Negotiators.
- In April 1998, FTAA negotiations officially launched by leaders.
- In June 1998, TNC establishes work programmes for the nine negotiating groups and three consultative bodies.
- In September and October 1998, the nine negotiating groups and three consultative bodies hold first meetings to organize their work.
- In December 1998, TNC reviews the work of the negotiating groups and consultative groups and makes progress on business facilitation.
- Selection of a Canadian to serve as Director of the FTAA Administrative Secretariat in Miami.

EUROPEAN UNION

- Signature and implementation of the Canada-EU MRA on conformity assessment for regulated products in May 1998 will reduce costs and facilitate market access in Europe for Canadian producers of telecommunications terminal equipment, IT equipment, electrical equipment, medical devices, pharmaceuticals and recreational boats.
- Signature in December 1998 of an agreement on veterinary equivalency (health requirements