

Mr. Mazankowski noted that all parts of the Canadian agricultural sector, both those which are export dependent and those which are domestically oriented, would benefit from a system of fairer, clearer, and strengthened GATT rules which treat all countries equally and provide fair competitive conditions between countries.

The ministers also commented on how the proposed agricultural trade reform would be consistent with Canada's capacity to maintain domestic supply management systems.

"The present GATT rules, under Article XI, permit import restrictions in support of effective domestic production control programs," Mr. Mazankowski said. The federal government is committed to retaining the border controls necessary to ensure that our supply management programs can function effectively.

On the proposal of converting non-tariff measures into tariff equivalents, Mr. Crosbie made it clear to the Cairns Group members that, in Canada's view, this would not apply to import measures maintained in conformity with GATT Article XI.

Mr. Crosbie said that, as part of the agreed objective to improve the GATT rules, Canadian trade negotiators will be pursuing the clarification and strengthening of Article XI.

The Ministers added: "Canada's participation in the Cairns Group strengthens our voice in achieving common goals, and furthers Canada's influence on the final outcome of the GATT negotiations."

"With the circulation of the Cairns Group proposal," they said, "it is now up to the European Community and Japan to also table their comprehensive reform proposals."

For more information, media may contact:

Tom Van Dusen  
Press Secretary  
Mr. Mazankowski's office  
(613) 957-5657

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