

Canada's Market Access Priorities for 2004

- Continue to work toward a free trade agreement with the Dominican Republic.
- Continue representations aimed at the removal of the Dominican Republic's BSE measures on imports from Canada.

IMPROVING ACCESS FOR TRADE IN GOODS

In March 2002, the President of the Dominican Republic and Prime Minister Chrétien agreed to consider bilateral free trade negotiations and decided that the two countries would initiate exploratory discussions on enhancing their trade relationship. Extensive public consultations were launched in November 2002 to obtain the views of Canadians. Exploratory discussions toward negotiation of a free trade agreement continued in 2003.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Following Canada's May 20, 2003, announcement of a BSE case, the Dominican Republic suspended the import of Canadian cattle and beef. Canada has kept all its trading partners, including the Dominican Republic, fully informed of the results of its investigation and regulatory response, and it is requesting a resumption of trade on scientific grounds. (For further information, see the BSE overview in Chapter 2.)