



news release

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CANADA HOSTS CAIRNS GROUP OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORTERS IN OTTAWA

MAY 21-23, 1987

The Honourable Pat Carney, Minister for International Trade, the Honourable Charles Mayer, Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board and the Honourable John Wise, Minister of Agriculture, will host the second meeting of the Cairns Group of Agricultural Exporters from May 21-23 in Ottawa.

The Cairns Group, which first met at Ministerial level last summer in Australia, is a group of fourteen developed and developing country exporters. The Group was particularly influential in securing far-reaching objectives for agriculture in the current GATT round of multilateral trade negotiations launched in Punta del Este, Uruguay, last September.

Canada's initiative to host the meeting reflects the lead role Canada is taking in seeking solutions to the serious agricultural trade situation facing the world today. "There has been steady progress in this issue over the past several months and particularly at last week's OECD meeting in Paris," said Miss Carney. "The challenge for us over the next few days is to build on this progress in order to provide long term security for the agricultural community."

Over the past year Canada has taken a number of steps to urge other governments to join in our efforts to reduce problems in international agricultural trade.

- " May 1986, Prime Minister Mulroney raised the problems of agricultural trade at the Tokyo Economic Summit and noted the serious impact of the situation on the economies of many countries.

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- ° June 1986, the Honourable Charles Mayer initiated meetings with his counterparts from five major grain exporters for the first time ever, in Whistler, B.C. The five include the United States, the European Economic Community, Australia, Argentina and Canada. The Ministers agreed that agriculture be given comprehensive consideration in the MTN.
- ° August 1986, Mr. Mayer represented Canada at the first Cairns Group Meeting in Australia.
- ° September 1986, the Right Honourable Joe Clark and the Honourable Tom Hockin were instrumental in having agriculture included in the current GATT round of multilateral trade negotiations launched in Punta del Este.
- ° January 1987, the Honourable John Wise pursued Canada's concerns by meeting with his counterparts during a visit to Australia. Mr. Wise has also been actively consulting with domestic farm organizations on this issue.
- ° February 1987, Mr. Mayer attended a meeting hosted by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Richard Lyng, in San Diego, California to follow up on the Whistler meeting.
- ° March 1987, Canada submitted principles for agricultural trade reform to OECD Secretary General Paye.
- ° March 1987, Miss Carney continued to press for early progress in agricultural trade reform at a meeting of Trade Ministers at Taupo, New Zealand. Miss Carney advanced Canada's OECD proposals at this meeting.
- ° April 1987, Miss Carney placed agriculture on the agenda of the Quadrilateral Trade Ministers meeting in Japan.
- ° May 1987, Miss Carney and Finance Minister Michael Wilson attended the OECD Ministerial Meeting where considerable progress was achieved on agricultural trade reform. The OECD communique incorporated the essential elements of the Canadian principles put forth by Minister Carney to the OECD and reiterated in New Zealand.

Canadian ministers have been instrumental in obtaining priority attention for agricultural trade on the international agenda. The Cairns Ministerial Meeting plays an important role in developing the momentum which has been growing over the past year.