



Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

Agreement demonstrates our government's commitment to creating good new jobs and economic growth for Canadian families, workers and businesses

(No. 230 - August 15, 2011 - 2:15 p.m. ET) The Honourable Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, today welcomed the coming into force of Canada's free trade agreement with Colombia. Today's important announcement follows Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to Colombia last week, during which he announced that the agreement would come into force on August 15, 2011.

"Our government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Harper, received a strong mandate to implement an ambitious job-creating free trade plan that will benefit Canadian workers and their families," said Minister Fast. "This free trade agreement with Colombia is a key part of our government's plan to open new markets for Canadian workers, farmers and businesses in all regions of Canada."

"Our government, under Prime Minister Harper, is taking steps—through our low tax, job-creating free trade plan—to create new opportunities for Canadian workers," said Minister Fast.

The free trade agreement with Colombia will benefit Canadian workers and businesses across the country and many sectors of the Canadian economy, including agriculture (wheat, pulses, barley), paper products, heavy equipment, investment, mining, oil exploration, printing and education.

Through the agreement, Canada's producers and exporters will benefit from reduced or eliminated tariffs on nearly all of Canada's current exports to Colombia. The agreement will also provide a more predictable, transparent and rules-based trading environment for Canadian investors and businesses.

Canadian Cattlemen's Association President Travis Toews accompanied Prime Minister Harper to Bogotá and applauded the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

"We are very pleased to see the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement come into place with the new access it will create for Canadian beef. Exports are the lifeblood of the Canadian cattle and beef sector, and I commend Minister Fast and Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Gerry Ritz for their efforts to open markets," said Mr. Toews.

The Mining Association of Canada (MAC) also applauded the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. "Latin America is the largest recipient of Canadian direct investment abroad in mining, which in 2008 was valued at \$57 billion," stated Pierre Gratton, MAC President and CEO. "Free trade agreements, such as this week's agreement with Colombia, strengthen our ties with Latin America, which translates into jobs and opportunities for Canadian miners and mining service suppliers here in Canada. Prime Minister Harper's Latin American trade mission last week will pay dividends to Canadians for years to come."

Colombia is a dynamic emerging market with a population of 48 million and an economy with high growth potential. It is a strategic destination for Canadian direct investment, especially in the

mining and oil and gas sectors. In 2010, Canada's bilateral merchandise trade with Colombia totalled over \$1.3 billion.

For more information, please visit [Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement](#).

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