



**Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food (AGRI)**

**From: The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA)**

Submitted: November 21, 2022

To: House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6  
Canada  
Submitted via email: AGRI@parl.gc.ca

**RE: Clarification on recent testimony/Supplementary information**

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the Canadian Agri-food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), we are pleased to submit supplementary information to the AGRI Committee following an appearance by CAFTA Executive Director Claire Citeau on October 26, 2022. We wanted to ensure Committee Members have accurate information related to Canada's export-oriented agri-food sector.

In a Q&A session following CAFTA's remarks, Member of Parliament Alistair MacGregor noted correctly that Canada's agri-food exports continue to grow, and are close to reaching the "Barton Report" goal of \$75 billion by 2025.

Perhaps of interest, we wish to provide the following information and analysis related to this discussion:

Export Targets:

The Economic Tables report set a target of **\$85 billion by 2025** for agriculture, agri-food and seafood. The Barton Report set a target of **\$75 billion by 2025** using Farm Credit Canada (FCC)'s 2016 report on exports which includes aquaculture in its calculations.

Total exports 2021

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) reports agri-food exports, including fish seafood, raw agricultural materials and processed foods, was close to **\$82.2 billion in 2021**. Excluding seafood and fish, agri-food exports were **\$73.5 billion** in 2021

CAFTA Analysis

While we are pleased to see our exports growing, Canada's share of the global market remains stagnant. We remain the 5<sup>th</sup> largest agri-food exporter in the world and have stayed in this position for several years after previously being in the top three. We would encourage the committee to review export numbers carefully and

perhaps consider additional statistics and data as measures of Canada's agri-food growth globally. Practically, this means measuring our growth against the wider share of the market, against the growth of our key competitors (the U.S., Australia, the EU, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico etc) and importantly against the costs of leveraging the access promised. This is also means taking into consideration factors such as commodity prices, production costs and assessing the value of exports against the volume of exports. Overall, we need to be nuanced in our analysis of "increased exports" and how other factors impact our global competitiveness.

We look forward to continuing to work with Committee Members to find ways to ensure our sector is a sustainable and inclusive driver of job creation and economic growth in every region of the country.

## **Appendix 1 – Transcript of exchange at AGRI on October 26, 2022**

### **Mr. Alistair MacGregor:**

Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms. Citeau, I'd like to start with you.

In our previous panel, we had Professor Charlebois. I was taking notes during his opening statement. I believe he said that our exports are continuing to grow at a pretty significant pace, and that we hit \$82 billion in 2021. Is that something you can confirm? Does that sound like a figure that you've heard before?

[\[Expand\]](#)

### **Ms. Claire Citeau:**

I think so. I wonder if that number includes fisheries or not.

[\[Expand\]](#)

### **Mr. Alistair MacGregor:**

Okay.

The Barton report had a goal of \$75 billion by 2025, so it's pretty impressive that, despite the many challenges out there, we've already surpassed the target four years ahead of schedule. We had Canada's beef producers say that they have been surpassing their targets and doing quite well. I know there are challenges out there, but it seems like our farmers are indeed stepping up to the plate.

I also have the privilege of sitting on our public safety and national security committee. A few weeks ago we had, as a witness, the chief of defence staff General Wayne Eyre. He painted a very worrying picture of the world we're getting into with respect to Russia and China. I know that future conflicts may not be overt military actions, but they have a serious consequence for world trade.

I know your organization must be looking at the geopolitical context. Can you explore a little bit more on the theme of resiliency? If Russia and China are going to be major adversaries, as our chief of defence staff sincerely believes they will be, what kinds of contingency plans do we need to put in place with respect to our agricultural trade to take that into account?

[\[Expand\]](#)

### **Ms. Claire Citeau:**

I think a lot of the work that is being done both by officials and industry in terms of strengthening trade relations with key trading partners needs to continue to happen.

As a matter of fact, a portion of our members have really set their eyes on the Indo-Pacific Asia region, and one of the ways they are proposing to really tackle and do better in this market is by having boots on the ground. They as well as CAFTA are calling on the need for stronger advocacy capacity within the diplomatic networks so that our officials and those representing Canada, who already do a very important and good job

promoting the sector, are equipped with the proper information and tools when it comes to preventing issues from becoming problems.

[Evidence - AGRI \(44-1\) - No. 34 - House of Commons of Canada \(ourcommons.ca\)](#)

### About CAFTA

CAFTA is a coalition of national organizations that support a more open and fair international trading environment for agriculture and agri-food. Representing the 90% of farmers who depend on trade and ranchers, producers, processors and agri-food exporters who want to grow the economy through better access to international markets. This includes the beef, pork, meat, grains, cereals, pulses, soybeans, canola as well as the sugar, malt, and processed food industries. The sectors CAFTA represents support over a million jobs in urban and rural communities across Canada.

CC:

Kody Blois, Chair, Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food  
John Barlow, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food  
Yves Perron, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food  
Josée Harrison, Clerk of the Committee, Committee on Agriculture and Agri