

Moving forward on vision and action for Canadian agriculture

OTTAWA, February 19, 2007 — The Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI) is releasing a report that calls for the repositioning of Canadian agri-food policies and the sectors such policies support.

The report — *Moving Forward on Vision and Action for Canadian Agriculture* — provides a perspective on the operating environment affecting the agricultural, agri-food and agri-business sectors, outlines a strategic direction for the future, and identifies areas of activity that must be pursued if that direction is to be realized. The report is premised on a vision of enhancing the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector's contribution to the quality of life for Canadians in many areas, including health, energy and the environment.



The report is being released to coincide with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's 'Next Generation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Policy' consultations which are currently underway. The report is designed to stimulate dialogue and action with respect to the next generation of Canadian agricultural policy-making.

"The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sectors must operate in the present but anticipate the future," said CAPI Chair Gaëtan Lussier. "Agricultural policy and programming needs to be forward looking, and needs a framework that fosters the development of policies and programs that both provide solutions for Canadian agriculture and agri-business and also contribute to a better quality of life for all Canadians."

Six pillars support the vision outlined in the report. They are:

- The health and well-being of Canadians through foods that help prevent diseases and lower health care costs associated with chronic diseases;
- The health and well-being of Canadians through a safe and secure food supply that guards against infectious diseases and lowers health care costs associated with acute diseases;
- Sustainable production practices to protect and secure the environment and natural resources;
- Sustainable bio-economy production of functional foods, feeds fibres and other products;
- Differentiation in the marketplace based on natural and climatic advantages; and,
- Investment opportunities in the agri-food sector.

The report also identifies a number of areas of activity that must be pursued if the direction and vision articulated are to be realized. They include, but are not limited to: fostering innovation and commercialization of new technologies, overcoming regulatory obstacles, building on natural advantages and sector strengths, delivering on local food demands and addressing farm sector specific issues.

"An overarching thrust of the next generation of Canadian agri-food policy must be to make Canada an attractive place in which to practice agriculture and food production," said Mr. Lussier. "This must be a core part of policy development efforts, and involves both building on our natural competitive strengths and eliminating or at least minimizing our weaknesses."