

Report sets foundation for a new agricultural policy

OTTAWA, June 14, 2010 — The Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI) has released the report *Challenging Our Past: Preparing for the Future; Ideas and Questions for Agriculture and Agri-Food Policies*.

Challenging Our Past:
Preparing for the Future
Ideas and Questions
for
Agriculture and
Agri-Food Policies

Executive Report
May 2010



Canada's fiscal situation demands change. Its capacity to be competitive demands change. CAPI suggests that the country needs to transform the approach to policy-making itself.

"We need to achieve policy convergence. We also need to have a longer-term destination in mind so we can, collectively, work together over time to better position Canada. The objective is to foster an agri-food sector that contributes to the development of a more innovative, sustainable and prosperous Canada," said David McInnes, President of CAPI.

In its report, CAPI outlines an initial set of principles and ideas that could form the building blocks for a vision that gets us there. It also raises questions and ideas that we need to collectively address. In the months ahead, CAPI will be further developing this work and engaging stakeholders to do so.

In short, the economic viability of the agriculture and agri-food sector depends on how all players in the supply chain — from producers to retailers — are responding to the new realities of the marketplace, such as the consumers' demand for healthier and more sustainably-produced products. Governments will need to be convinced that new approaches are forthcoming. Stakeholders need to come together to advance new ideas.

"It is apparent that we need a total food industry response, met by a total government response, to position Canada for the future," added McInnes.

CAPI is creating a dialogue on the issues facing the country's agri-food sector and the policy options required to better position the country. Its work is based on three themes: food and wellness connection, sustainability and viability. This document sets out the significant trends that are influencing the shape of the sector; it provides a snapshot of its work program and its three Leadership Panels. As well, the report identifies emerging policy themes and linkages across the three thematic areas.

About CAPI

The Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI) is an independent, unbiased policy forum that is dedicated to the success of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. CAPI is a catalyst. It identifies emerging issues, promotes dialogue and advances alternative solutions to issues with

stakeholders across the diverse agriculture and agri-food value chain, and among academia, research institutes, governments and other sectors in Canada.

Based in Ottawa, CAPI was established as a not-for-profit corporation in 2004 by the federal government and is guided by a diverse Board of Directors, under the chairmanship of Gaëtan Lussier, and an Advisory Committee. As well, to help generate novel policy options to enable Canada to thrive in the emerging agri-food world, CAPI has established three issue-specific panels, including the Leadership Panel on Food and Wellness Connection, the Leadership Panel on Sustainability, and the Leadership Panel on Viability.