



News Release

For immediate release

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA PROVIDES \$1 MILLION TO HELP AGRI-BUSINESSES IMPROVE MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

GUELPH, Ontario, February 22, 2008 – The Government of Canada is investing \$1 million to help farmers and agri-food businesses expand market opportunities through the establishment of a Value Chain Management Centre (VCMC) in Ontario. Bev Shipley, Member of Parliament for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, made this announcement today on behalf of the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.

“The Government of Canada is working hard for farmers to ensure they remain competitive,” said Mr. Shipley. “This initiative will bring together farm businesses, processors and retailers of all sizes, increasing their ability to compete as well as their profits.”

The VCMC, located at the George Morris Centre, will work with industry to increase awareness and demonstrate the financial and competitive benefits of value chains. It will enable farmers and agri-food businesses to expand their market opportunities and increase profitability. Creating value chain partnerships allows farmers, processors and retailers to work together to achieve more effective results.

The Centre will operate in conjunction with the College of Management Economics at the University of Guelph and partners representing the agriculture, marketing, processing, retail and foodservice industries. An independent Advisory Board of appointed stakeholder representatives will determine the VCMC’s strategic direction and activities.

Martin Gooch, Senior Research Associate at the George Morris Centre and VCMC Director, noted that “value chains are often considered purely a concept with little relevance to actual business. To me, this illustrates a general lack of understanding about value chains as a management issue. The Centre’s work will focus on helping to create the capacity necessary for farmers and agri-food managers to better manage the chains in which they operate.”

"The Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC) is pleased to support a project that will facilitate the growth of value chains in the Ontario agriculture and food industry," said Kim Turnbull, AAC Chair. "The VCMC will encourage value chains in the agriculture and food industry, as a way of improving Canada's position in the highly competitive international marketplace."

This project is being supported by AAC’s CanAdvance Program, which is funded under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Program.



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