



GEORGE MORRIS CENTRE

News Release

After Hong Kong: Potential Impacts of the WTO Doha Round

Guelph, ON (April 10, 2006) A special report, released today by the George Morris Centre, reviews the negotiating proposals from the WTO Doha Round, and provides analysis of their potential impacts on US farm subsidies, market opportunities for exporting countries, and Canadian agri-food.

The report, *After Hong Kong: Potential Impacts of the WTO Doha Round*, was written by Larry Martin, Al Mussell, and Terri-lyn Moore. It looks at what is required for a positive outcome from this round, and concludes that everyone will need to give up something. Once an agreement is reached, whether Canada has contributed to or resisted it, we will have no choice but to sign it.

As well, the US will have no real alternative to changing the nature of its farm support programs. According to Mussell, “when typical supply and demand interaction is recognized, the proposals will have significant bite on US farm programs”

Martin agrees and says that “all of the proposals would result in significant changes to international agricultural subsidies and agricultural protectionism. While this would place some pressure on Canada’s supply managed industries, they would also likely be reasonably well protected. At the same time, the proposals would also give our export-oriented industries significant opportunities. The grains and oilseed sector would likely see a major reduction in the distorting nature of US subsidies. On balance, there would be significant benefit to Canada’s agri-food industry if these proposals actually became part of the agreement.”

Canada would also benefit long term by helping to find the compromise, and the existing proposals are close enough for middle ground to be reached.

The complete report is available on the George Morris Centre website:
www.georgemorris.org

- 30 -

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The George Morris Centre is a national, not-for-profit think tank specializing in the Canadian Agri-food sector. The Centre provides perspective, critical information, strategic analysis, and planning, as well as education on issues affecting the sector.