

Geneva Watch

An overview of the WTO negotiations on agriculture

EU Commissioners Meet with Canadian Counterparts on CETA

Coming off a meeting with US Trade Representative Ron Kirk on February 5-6 which failed to complete the High –Level Working Group (HLWG) report on a potential comprehensive EU-US free trade agreement, the office of the EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht stressed that the meeting with the Americans allowed the two sides to make “good progress” on the remaining issues.

The term “good progress” was also the one used following the February 6-7 ministerial meeting that both EU Commissioners De Gucht and Ciolos (Agriculture) held with their Canadian counterparts (Trade Minister Ed Fast and Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz).

“There are still a number of important gaps to be bridged before an agreement is reached”, said EU Trade Spokesman, John Clancy, adding that “discussions will now continue between chief negotiators” in the coming weeks.

According to the Commission, the quality of the talks is what matters most. “Quality and substance of the negotiations remain paramount over speed,” said Clancy.

De Gucht’s office insisted on the fact that the ministerial permitted to progress on some of the toughest issues still on the table. For instance, in the area of agriculture, the Commission declared that discussions are now taking place on what they would consider as “a more realistic zone”, even though negotiators “are still not there yet.”

European sources said the Commission was considering a TRQ offer that would be comprised between 40-60’000 tons each for beef and pork; volumes which are lower than Canada’s original demands, they said.

One European source said, France’s Prime Minister, Jean Marc Ayrault, wrote to the President of the Commission to reiterate France’s sensitivities concerning beef. The French are the biggest producers of beef in the EU (1.575 million tons in 2012) but also one of the biggest consumers (1.613 million tons in 2012). They exported 285 million tons and imported about 385 million tons the same year, from mainly from Germany, Ireland, Italy or Netherlands.

Among other issues still on the table and on which additional work among negotiators is still required, the Commission cited pharmaceuticals, public procurement provisions - and more precisely “public urban transport,” the Commission said.

European trade observers said they did not expect the February 6-7 ministerial meeting to conclude the CETA negotiations. However, this remains very high on Commissioner De Gucht’s agenda as it is seen as the one deal that could allow the EU-US free trade agreement to get the green light.



Upcoming Events

- Informal Agriculture Negotiation, Mid-February
- General Council, February 15–26, May 1-2, July 24-25, Oct. 8-9, Nov. 5-6, 2013
- TPP Round XVI, March 3–14, 2013 (Singapore)
- Regular Agriculture Committee, March 26, September 4, November 12, 2013
- APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, April 20-21, 2013
- OECD Annual Forum, May 27–31, 2013 (Paris)
- APEC Leaders Summit, October 1–8, 2013
- WTO 9th Ministerial Conference (MC9) December 3–6, 2013, Bali (Indonesia)

Geneva Watch is published by Dairy Farmers of Canada, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Egg Farmers of Canada, Turkey Farmers of Canada and Canadian Hatching Egg Producers to report on the various events occurring in Geneva, particularly on the WTO negotiations on agriculture.

For more information or comments, please visit:

www.dairyfarmers.ca, www.chicken.ca, www.eggs.ca, www.turkeyfarmersofcanada.ca, www.cbhema.com.

Legal Deposit: National Library of Canada, ISSN 1496-9254



Dairy Farmers
of Canada
Les Producteurs laitiers
du Canada



Chicken Farmers
of Canada
Les Producteurs de
poulet du Canada

EGG FARMERS
OF CANADA
Dedicated to Quality



LES PRODUCTEURS
D'ŒUFS DU CANADA
Dédiés à la qualité



TURKEY FARMERS
OF CANADA
LES ÉLEVÉS DE DINDON
DU CANADA

Canadian
Hatching Egg
Producers



Les Producteurs
d'œufs d'incubation
du Canada