



Canadian produce industry urges parliamentarians to consider important trade and health issues

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 9, 2017, Ottawa — On November 7 and 8, industry leaders representing the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) and the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) met with over 50 Parliamentarians and civil servants in Ottawa to discuss key issues currently affecting the Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable sector.

Notably, CPMA and CHC representatives addressed the need for continued free and fair trade agreements with new and emerging markets to support industry, and advocated for the adoption of an integrated and collaborative approach to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in a new Food Policy for Canada. Both issues are critical for the industry, and have severe implications on the cost and quality of produce, the health of Canadians, and Canada's potential for economic growth, especially within the context of current NAFTA renegotiations. Industry representatives also discussed labour policy and the need for financial protection for produce sellers.

"The fresh fruit and vegetable industry plays a significant role in supporting Canada's goals to provide safe, affordable, and accessible product year round. The produce supply chain had an estimated economic impact of \$15.7 billion in real GDP and supported 181,566 jobs in 2016, all the while encouraging healthy eating habits," states Rick Alcocer, CPMA Chair.

"Good health starts with what we put in our bodies, and we know that the healthiest foods are fruits and vegetables," states Alvin Keenan, CHC President. "The federal government needs to assume a leadership role in offering accessible fruit and vegetable options to all Canadians, from coast to coast to coast."

Following these productive meetings, CPMA and CHC hosted a reception featuring *Half Your Plate* Ambassador Chef Michael Smith. This well-attended event featured a food demonstration with Chef Michael and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Lawrence MacAulay and provided representatives of the produce industry a more informal environment to network and cement relationships with Parliamentarians and their staff.



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Meetings on the Hill
Rencontres sur la colline

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About the Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Based in Ottawa, Ontario, CPMA is a not-for-profit organization that represents a diverse membership of over 850 members who represent every segment of the produce industry supply chain and are responsible for 90% of the fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada from farm gate to dinner plate. CPMA is fortunate to represent a sector that is both a significant economic driver for communities and that also improves the health and productivity of Canadians.

About the Canadian Horticultural Council

The Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) is an Ottawa-based voluntary, not-for-profit, national association that represents fruit and vegetable growers across Canada involved in the production of over 120 different types of crops on over 27,500 farms, with farm cash receipts of \$6 billion in 2016. Since 1922, CHC has advocated on important issues that impact Canada's horticultural sector, promoting healthy, safe and sustainable food, and ensuring the continued success and growth of our industry.