



Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

January 16, 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of Canada's fresh fruit and vegetable industry to urge your government to ensure the timely ratification of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). Particularly in light of today's passage of the agreement in the United States Senate, it is now imperative for Canada to follow with its own swift action.

Since the implementation of the previous North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable exports to Mexico and the U.S. have increased by approximately 396% when adjusted for inflation. This growth is indicative of the importance of tariff-free trade and the integration of our marketplace within North America and within the fresh produce industry.

The integrated North American supply chain also continues to be an important tool in ensuring that Canadian consumers have a consistent and diverse supply of fresh fruit and vegetables year-round, despite a relatively short growing season domestically. In order to meet the Canadian government's agri-food export target of 2025 – and to ensure that Canadians can meet the recommendation in Canada's Food Guide that they fill half their plates with fruits and vegetables – the continuation of tariff-free access under CUSMA is essential.

The Canadian agricultural sector has recently experienced the negative consequences of trade uncertainty. The previous NAFTA has been a tremendous success for the fresh fruit and vegetable industry and the renegotiated CUSMA has the potential to further increase trade across the continent. Therefore, and on behalf of a deeply integrated North American membership, we strongly urge the Government of Canada to take immediate action to ratify this Agreement to facilitate a strong fresh produce industry for generations to come.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R Lemaire', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ron Lemaire
President
Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Cc: Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs