



PRESS RELEASE

CPMA joins Parliamentarians' visit to Washington in support of Canadian fresh produce sector

April 12, 2024 (Washington, D.C.) – Yesterday, Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) President, Ron Lemaire, joined Canadian Parliamentarians in productive meetings with US Congress members and other officials in Washington. They held discussions around issues of impact on Canada and USA agriculture trade in addition to key files for the fresh fruits and vegetable sector. These included food as medicine, the importance of integrated supply chains, food security within North America and financial protection for fresh produce sellers through Bill C-280, the *Financial Protection for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Act*, currently before the Canadian Senate.

The Honourable Senators Brent Cotter and Mary Robinson, along with House of Commons Agriculture Committee Chair, Kody Blois, and Members of Parliament John Barlow, Scot Davidson, Randy Hoback and Heath MacDonald, met with US officials including, Andrew Stephens, White House Lead on Plastics and Sustainability; Robert Bonnie, USDA Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation; Bruce Summers, Administrator of the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service; and members of the US Congressional Agricultural Trade Caucus, Chairman GT Thompson, Congressman Jim Costa, Congressman Jimmy Panetta and Congressman David Valadao.

"The *US Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA)* offers effective financial protection and an important market stability tool for the US produce industry," said Lemaire. "The Canadian produce industry has been advocating for similar protection for many years. These discussions provided a great forum for our elected officials to further confirm why we need Bill C-280 to be passed into law to protect our essential sector."

Yesterday's meetings also offered an opportunity to discuss the significant industry efforts undertaken on both sides of the border to adopt more sustainable practices, including in relation to produce packaging. They also emphasized the critical importance of supporting our strong bilateral trading partnership and a fluid North American fresh produce supply chain.

"The fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain is one of the most highly integrated in the world, with benefits for businesses and consumers throughout North America," said Lemaire. "It is critical that our governments and elected officials understand this interconnectedness and prioritize measures to support food security and promote the increased consumption of healthy food on both sides of the border."

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Micken Kokonya
Manager, Communications and Market Research
Canadian Produce Marketing Association



Telephone: 613-226-4187 x225 | Cell: 613-878-3312

Email: mkokonya@cpma.ca

About the Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Based in Ottawa, Ontario, CPMA is a not-for-profit organization that represents a diverse membership made up of every segment of the produce industry supply chain who are responsible for 90% of the fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada. 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.