



PRESS RELEASE

CPMA Highlights Agriculture's Pivotal Role in Global Growth at IICA G7 Shoulder Event, Urging Immediate Action on Solutions

June 17, 2025 (Ottawa, ON) – This week, Ron Lemaire, President of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA), represented the fresh produce supply chain as an active participant in the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) G7 shoulder event, the **2025 Americas Agriculture & Food Security Forum**, which ran from June 16-17 in Olds, Alberta. CPMA's participation was an important opportunity to underscore the critical importance of agriculture and the fresh produce supply chain as a cornerstone for economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social well-being for G7 member countries and the global community, and to emphasize the urgent need for tangible solutions to the industry's challenges.

The G7, comprising some of the world's leading economies, holds a significant responsibility in shaping global policy and addressing pressing challenges. Agriculture, often seen primarily as a food source, is increasingly recognized as a multifaceted sector that drives innovation, creates employment, fosters rural development, and plays a vital role in climate resilience and biodiversity. The time for decisive action on agriculture and produce sector solutions is now.

"Agriculture is far more than just food production; it is the foundation of resilient economies, sustainable societies, and healthy communities," stated Ron Lemaire. "The IICA G7 shoulder event, the 2025 Americas Agriculture & Food Security Forum, offers a crucial opportunity to emphasize how strategic investment and collaborative policy-making can unlock the full potential of agriculture, addressing global food security, mitigating climate change impacts, and fostering inclusive growth. There is an urgent imperative for action to develop and implement solutions that will secure our agricultural future, aligning directly with CPMA's goals for a thriving and accessible produce sector."

Discussions at the event focused on three key themes:

- **Economic Growth:** Highlighting agriculture's contribution to GDP, trade, and job creation—particularly in rural areas—as well as its potential to diversify economies through value-added products and agri-tech innovation. CPMA advocates for robust free trade policies and reduced barriers to market access for fresh produce, fostering an environment where the produce industry can grow, innovate, and contribute significantly to economic prosperity across G7 nations.
- **Sustainability:** Exploring sustainable agricultural practices that enhance soil health, conserve water, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote biodiversity. These practices align with global climate goals and support long-term environmental stewardship. CPMA supports initiatives that encourage environmentally responsible production, packaging, and distribution of fruits and vegetables, recognizing the sector's vital role in climate resilience and resource management.



- **Social Growth:** Examining how a thriving agricultural sector can reduce poverty, improve livelihoods, empower women and youth, and ensure food and nutritional security for all, contributing to social cohesion and stability. CPMA is committed to increasing the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, which directly contributes to better public health outcomes, improves food accessibility, and promotes healthier lifestyles, which are fundamental to social well-being and development globally.

The IICA event provided a valuable platform for policymakers, industry leaders, and experts to collaborate on strategies to strengthen agricultural systems and ensure they remain productive, resilient, and equitable in the face of evolving global challenges. CPMA's participation brings a vital perspective to these discussions, advocating for policies that support an innovative, sustainable, and growing fresh produce supply chain with immediate and impactful solutions, while championing the role of fresh produce in a healthy and secure global food system.

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About the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA)

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.

About the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is the specialized agency of the inter-American system for agriculture. Its mission is to encourage, promote and support the efforts of its Member States to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being through international technical cooperation of excellence.