

Sheep Summit held in Ottawa

for immediate release

GUELPH, ONTARIO – October 12, 2004 – Crippled by the border closure, the Canadian Sheep industry held its first Sheep Summit in Ottawa this past week. Industry and government representatives met to discuss the impact of the border closure and the Canadian Sheep Federation's National Border Closure Recovery Strategy.

Stressing the need for quick action, individual producers, feedlot operators, the processing, retail and livestock supplies sectors, along with the wool industry and provincial sheep organizations, provided presentations on the impact of the border closure. Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Andy Mitchell along with senior staff from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency were also presented with industry's Border Closure Recovery Strategy.

The Strategy was developed by the Canadian Sheep Federation in consultation and with the support of the provincial sheep organizations, and has been designed to poise the industry for expansion and prosperity in the post BSE environment. It consists of a ewe lamb retention plan, investment in federally inspected processing capacity, market development, improved traceability and scrapie surveillance.

"The results of the Sheep Summit are very encouraging" reports Randy Eros, Chair of the Canadian Sheep Federation. "Minister Mitchell is clearly committed to moving forward with us on a strategy that will reposition the sheep industry."

The commitment from the government is evident by Minister Mitchell's promise to move quickly on a number of the critical issues that were identified and by the formation of the joint industry/government Task Force. The Task Force which will meet the week of October 18, 2004, has been instructed to further develop critical elements of the Recovery Strategy.

The Canadian Sheep Federation is a national, non-profit organization that represents all Canadian sheep producers. Its mission is further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry.

-30-

For more information contact the Canadian Sheep Federation at 1-888-684-7739 or cansheep@cansheep.ca.

