

Other Ruminants Left Out of Funding Announcement

Guelph, March 11, 2005 – Other ruminant industries have once again been ignored by the Federal government.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Andy Mitchell announced a \$50 million contribution to the Canadian Cattlemen's Association to aid in the launching of a marketing campaign to expand markets for Canadian beef. This has left other ruminant livestock groups bewildered since they have yet to receive any response in regards to their repeated pleas to address some of the economic losses associated with the border closure. Despite repeated concerted attempts since May 20, 2003 to have our voice hear by government we feel completely ignored.

“While we certainly support the cattle industry and understand how desperately they need support, the Federal government is failing to provide any support for the sheep, goat, bison and cervid industries which are also suffering tremendously” says Andre Trepainer, Chair of the Canadian Sheep Federation. “Our industries, like the cattle industry, need assistance to rebuild and restructure in order to ensure our future viability and sustainability.

The sheep industry met with Minister Mitchell in October at which time he acknowledged the financial plight of sheep producers and that the BSE support programs developed lacked sheep industry input. Since then, despite a tremendous amount of effort by the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) on behalf of the sheep industry, there has been no tangible response from Minister Mitchell with regard to the Border Closure Recovery Strategy that has been submitted.

The failure by Minister Mitchell to respond to our concerns has created a considerable amount of uncertainty in the sheep industry.

A number of Provincial Agricultural Ministers have subsequently chosen to unilaterally support the sheep industry. They have done this by adopting the recommendations put forward in the repositioning strategy. This has resulted in announcements of support for other ruminants by the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia. The CSF would like to acknowledge these provinces for their support.

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