

Final Trip Report

Mission to Washington, DC

Dates: November 19 – 22, 2013

Purpose of travel:

The purpose of this trip was to meet with members of the United States Congress to advocate for a repeal of mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) for meat.

Overview:

The United States (US) COOL law requires meat to be labeled in detail according to the country in which each production stage (birth, raising, and slaughter) occurred. The World Trade Organization has found that COOL unfairly discriminates against imported Canadian cattle and hogs. The COOL law is currently being re-examined during the renewal of US farm Legislation (the Farm Bill). The renewal of the Farm Bill presents the best opportunity to end the discrimination caused by COOL.

Mission Objectives:

- To contribute to the advocacy efforts of government and industry seeking a repeal of COOL.
- To meet with key senators and representatives to outline Alberta's position on COOL and build support for a repeal of COOL.
- To draw attention to the negative impact of COOL on the meat and livestock industry in the US and Canada and underline the desirability of avoiding retaliatory tariffs on US exports to Canada if the US fails to bring COOL into compliance with its obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization.

Results:

- During November 21 and 22, 2013, Minister Olson met with Senator John Boozman (Arkansas), Representative Collin Peterson (Minnesota), Representative Kristi Noem (South Dakota), Representative Glenn Thompson (Pennsylvania), and Representative Austin Scott (Georgia). Minister Olson also met with the General Counsel of the Senate Agriculture Committee and staff from the Offices of Representative Tim Walz (Minnesota) and Senator John Hoeven (North Dakota).
- In each meeting, Minister Olson presented information on the damage COOL is causing the North American meat and livestock industry. Minister Olson used this opportunity during the drafting of the new US Farm Bill to advocate for a repeal of COOL and to avoid retaliatory trade sanctions by Canada.
- The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Canada's Minister of Agriculture and AgriFood, was able to join the meetings with Congressman Peterson and Senator Cochrane.

Delegation:

Minister Verlyn Olson

Nick Harsulla

Jason Krips

International Travel Final Expenses

Expenditures by Participants	Amount
Travel (includes airfare, airport service fees, ground transportation costs, including taxis, car rentals, parking, trains, buses as well as mileage to/from airport or taxis to/from airport in Alberta, including any cancellation fees)	\$ 2,835.75
Accommodation (room charges and related taxes, including any cancellation fees)	\$ 1,507.20
Meals (includes restaurant bills and tips, meals on hotel bills, per diem meal claims, share of group meals or working sessions)	\$ 203.38
Incidental and Miscellaneous (includes cell phone rental charges, incremental costs for all electronic devices such as roaming charges for cell phones, iPads and costs associated with communications such as the costs incurred for media call-backs, conference/registration fees, including cancellation fees, fax and internet charges, passport and visa fees, medical and inoculation fees, laundry and dry cleaning, baggage handling, out-of-country per diems, and other sundry expenditures)	\$ 115.74
Sub-Total	\$ 4,662.07
General Mission Expenditures	Amount
Receptions and Hosting (receptions, luncheons, dinners, and events that are hosted by the GoA that are specific to the mission and include meeting related costs for room rental, room rental for hosted events, food, beverages, catering staff, service charges, entertainment, flowers)	\$ 0.00
Incidental and Miscellaneous (includes translation of documents fees, publications, shipping charges, gifts purchased specifically for mission, Canadian Embassy/High Commission/Consulate charges for services provided to the GoA)	\$ 0.00
Sub-Total	\$ 0.00
Total Costs	\$ 4,662.07

News release:

[Alberta continues fight for livestock industry in Washington](#) (November 14, 2013)