

Final Trip Report

Legislative Agriculture Chairs Summit – Clearwater, Florida

Dates: January 2 - 5, 2015

Purpose of travel:

Attend the Legislative Agriculture Chairs (LAC) Summit.

Summit Overview:

The LAC Summit brings together senior United States (US) state agriculture legislators and Canadian provincial ministers, elected and department officials, and industry leaders to discuss agriculture challenges and potential solutions, and to broaden understanding between the US and Canada on agricultural issues. The Summit affords Canadian provinces and the federal government an excellent opportunity to network and advance key Canadian interests in agriculture, energy, trade and cross-border issues. The Summit is the only national conference for legislators whose major focus is the agriculture sector and rural communities.

The 2015 LAC Summit saw attendance from over 200 legislators, department officials and industry sponsors, representing 46 states and 7 provinces. Provincial Ministers of Agriculture from Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (PEI) were in attendance in addition to MLAs and department officials from Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and PEI. Representatives from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the Canada Embassy in Washington, DC (including Canada's Ambassador to the US, Gary Doer), and the Canadian Consulates of Minneapolis and Miami also participated at the Summit.

Mission Objectives:

- Advance Alberta/Canada's trade policy priorities with key US legislators and influential industry leaders; and
- Maintain and build strategic networks with US influencers.

Summit Highlights:

- A pre-Summit briefing for Canadian delegates was held to streamline advocacy messaging. Representatives from AAFC and the Consulate of Minneapolis provided an overview of Canada-US relations, regional priorities and advocacy efforts. John Masswohl, Director of Government and International Relations, Canadian Cattlemen's Association and Martin Rice, Executive Director, Canadian Pork Council, provided updates on the US appeal of the World Trade Organization (WTO) ruling on US mandatory Country of Origin Labelling (COOL) and potential next steps by Canada, including implementing retaliatory trade measures. Canada's Ambassador to the US, Gary Doer, provided an update on Embassy efforts on engaging members of Congress on the COOL file.
- The provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC, AAFC, and the Canadian Consulates of Denver, Minneapolis and Miami collaborated to deliver a Canada-US Partnership Profiling event at the Summit. The event featured Canada-US sourced ingredients highlighting the integrated and vital two-way trade between Canada and the US. Ambassador Doer provided the keynote address focusing on the unique Canada-US partnership on security, anti-terrorism, energy, border protection and the environment. He highlighted the importance of approving the Keystone XL Pipeline in

ensuring energy security. He also provided background and an update on Canada's position on the US appeal of the October 20, 2014 WTO ruling against the US on COOL. The Ambassador stated that COOL creates a negative impact to industries on both sides of the border, and encouraged the US to resolve and identify a solution that eliminates the discrimination against Canadian livestock in order to avoid retaliation. He reiterated that retaliation is not the preferred option.

2015 LAC Summit Agenda:

The Summit included a series of interactive plenary and concurrent sessions and panels that allowed for open discussion on key agricultural issues. The sessions provided legislators an opportunity to discuss common agriculture issues and potential approaches and solutions.

Session topics included:

- State/Provincial Water Quality Initiatives
- Rural Development
- Legality/Future/Regulation of Drones
- Veterinary Legal and Legislative Issues
- Drought, Water Conservation Initiatives
- Young and Beginning Farmers
- Agriculture Winning the Culture War
- Neonicotinoids and Bees
- Animal Care Standards Board

Jason Krips, Deputy Minister, ARD, participated in the Rural Development session, presenting Alberta's Rural Economic Development Action Plan.

Results:

- Advocated and sought support for the repeal of COOL by legislators;
- Enhanced Canada's profile by securing a strong Canadian presence, with representation from seven provinces and federal posts and key industry stakeholders;
- Profiled the Canada-US trade relationship;
- Expanded Alberta's contact network of key US legislative and industry influencers;
- Facilitated the development of strategic provincial/state and federal/provincial/state partnerships;
- Exchanged information on priority agriculture challenges; and
- Collaborated with provincial ministers, provincial elected officials, Canadian Embassy, Canadian Consulates, and key industry representatives to advance priority agriculture issues.

Delegation:

Jason Krips, Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Rural Development
Nick Harsulla, Chief of Staff to Minister Olson
Minister Olson did not attend due to illness

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)	\$ 1,334.92
Accommodation (room charges and related taxes, including any cancellation fees)	\$ 409.42
Meals (includes restaurant bills and tips, meals on hotel bills, per diem meal claims, share of group meals or working sessions)	\$ 17.77
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)	\$ 0.00
Sub-Total	\$ 1,762.11
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)	\$ 45.00
Sub-Total	\$ 45.00
Total Costs	\$ 1,807.11