



November 21, 2014

Mr. Steven West  
Director, Program Implementation Division  
Employment and Social Development Canada  
140 Promenade du Portage  
Gatineau, Quebec  
K1A 0J9

Re: Inclusion of canola in the National Commodity List for the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program

Dear Mr. West,

We write to seek your positive confirmation that the request will be granted to have canola reinstated on the National Commodity List for Mexico to enable applications under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) in 2014.

Our seed developer members have worked collaboratively with you and your team over the past 13 months to align requirements to support applications under the SAWP during the process of overhauling the broader Temporary Foreign Worker Program. We understand that you have reviewed the information provided in February 2014 and agree that canola meets the requirements to be added to the National Commodity List of the SAWP:

- The Temporary Foreign Workers are from Mexico and Mexico supports such applications;
- Activities are related to on-farm primary agriculture;
- Positions can be in lower or higher-skilled occupations; and
- Labour market requirements can be met including the absence of any local applications for the jobs despite the positions being posted for 4 weeks.

We understand that this request comes at a time when the government is reviewing and making considerable amendments to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. That being said, it has also been made clear by the government that on-farm primary agriculture, notably the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP), is exempt from the broader program re-design as there are proven acute labour shortages in this industry. Despite the publicly noted exemption for primary agriculture from the re-design, the fact that the canola sector has used the SAWP for 7 of the past 10 years, and our understanding of a commitment in July to amend the National Commodity List to include canola in 2014,



we remain without a decision on the National Commodity List. This is problematic as our experience with the SAWP demonstrates we need to submit our Labour Market Impact Assessment applications in December to secure arrival of the foreign workers by mid-April when they are needed for canola seed production.

There is particular urgency in ensuring canola is included on the National Commodity List as soon as possible:

- The process and forms for the Labour Market Impact Assessment are different between the SAWP and TFWP – meaning that our members need to commit in December to one stream or another for the necessary 2015 workers.
- While our industry has been able to use the Temporary Foreign Worker Program as a stop-gap measure for 3 out of the past 10 years, our foreign workers have used roughly 21 months of the 24 month maximum allowance. Should they come to Canada in 2015 they risk not being allowed to come back for 4 years. As such, some workers that have the necessary skills and experience from working with canola will surely not agree to use the TFWP in 2015 and not come to Canada to work with our industry in order to keep the door open for the future.

Our time constraints along with the technical hurdles noted above mean that a decision is required in the next 5 weeks (and likely 3 weeks given the holiday season) if we are to be in a position to be successful in 2015. As such, we are seeking your confirmation that canola will be added to the National Commodity List for Mexico prior to the end of 2014.

Sincerely,

Patti Miller  
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Canola Council of Canada  
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Canadian Seed Trade Association  
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CC: Alexis Jonathan Conrad, Director General, Temporary Foreign Workers, Employment and Social Development Canada

CC: Hon. Jason Kenney, Minister of Employment and Social Development

CC: Hon. Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture