

November 15, 2006

Minister Horner to attend Tri-Lateral meetings with ag counterparts on rural development

Edmonton... Alberta will continue to seek cooperation and agreement on rural development approaches at a meeting of North American agricultural leaders in Mexico.

Doug Horner, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development will attend the Tri-Lateral Rural Development Working Group Meetings in Morelia, Mexico from November 16 to 19. Horner will meet with agriculture leaders and officials from Canada, Mexico and the United States to advance rural development efforts in North America.

“These meetings are a great opportunity for all three nations to discuss and implement ideas on what we can do to build strong, prosperous rural communities,” said Horner. “By working together with key agricultural influencers in the U.S. and Mexico, we can explore best practices that have the potential to advance Alberta’s agriculture and agri-food interests.”

The meeting will focus on developing a two-year strategic plan for the rural development working group. Topics of discussion include: sustainable agriculture extension and research programs; participation in advancing conservation programs; and, renewable energy and bio-based products contributions to rural development.

This is the third meeting of the rural development group, established under the umbrella of the Tri-National Agriculture Accord, a forum for representatives from Canadian provinces, the U.S. and Mexican states to address common cross-border agri-food issues and strengthen agricultural trade relations. This meeting is a followup on the Tri-National Agricultural Accord Meeting that was held in Banff, Alberta in August 2006.

The Rural Development Working Group is one of three tri-lateral working groups developing action plans and recommendations for initiatives that could be undertaken at the state and provincial level. The other two working groups relate to harmonization and trade remedy policies. Each country has at least one representative on each working group and Horner is the Canadian provincial agriculture minister leading the work on the rural development group.

The estimated cost of the mission to Michoacan, Mexico for Horner and one staff member is approximately \$11,000. Horner will also be meeting in Guadalajara, Mexico with the new Consul from the Consulate of Canada in Guadalajara, Mexico.

- 30 -

Backgrounder: Itinerary attached

Media enquiries may be directed to:

Alberta Ag Media Line
(780) 422-1005

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Itinerary for Tri-Lateral Working Group Meetings, Mexico

Dates	Event
Thursday, November 16, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depart for Morelia, Mexico
Friday, November 17, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Rural Development Tri-Lateral Working Group Meeting
Saturday, November 18, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Development Tri-Lateral Working Group Meeting continues • Trade Remedies Working Group Meeting
Sunday, November 19, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonization Tri-Lateral Working Group Meeting • Depart Morelia for Guadalajara • Dinner meeting with Felipe Gomez, Grupo Vida
Monday, November 20, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Katherine Aleong, Consul, Consulate of Canada, Guadalajara • Depart Guadalajara for Edmonton

- 30 -

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