



Premiers Make Advancements on Internal Trade

SAINT ANDREWS, NB, July 20, 2018 – Premiers agree there is an urgent need to accelerate the pace of reducing barriers to trade within Canada, and they will take focused actions. This work is particularly important given the U.S. Administration’s protectionist measures.

Premiers will provide leadership in advancing the work of the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT) established under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) to break down barriers. Premiers ask Premiers Pallister and McNeil to coordinate with Trade Ministers in bringing down barriers.

One year ago, the CFTA came into effect, achieving broad coverage of the Canadian economy, including enhanced access to government procurement opportunities. Premiers recognize the important contribution of this modern Agreement in ensuring that the Canadian market remains stable and strong. Ministers have made progress on reducing barriers over the past year. However, further improvements to the flow of goods, services and investments across the country are necessary and require continued efforts and actions from all governments. Premiers noted that this work includes supporting Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut in their ability to participate in the food sector.

Provinces and Territories will take immediate and meaningful action to address the following regulatory barriers:

- **Occupational Health and Safety:** Jurisdictions have varying rules in place for First Aid course content, duration and types of courses as well as for types of first aid kits required in the workplace. Business owners may be required to purchase as many as 10 different kits, depending on the scope of their operations.
- **Transport regulations:** Some differences in provincial and territorial regulations may be appropriate to address local safety considerations but the trucking industry has raised some differences in regulations that can constitute barriers to fair competition and effective trade. Examples of barriers include restrictions on the use of wide base single tires, size and weight restrictions, and an area for future cooperation, electronic logging devices.
- **Agriculture:** Abattoirs can be licensed federally or provincially-territorially but only federally licensed abattoirs can export interprovincially or internationally. Meeting requirements for a federal license is costly and licensing requirements differ mainly in building and program requirements, not in food safety or animal welfare.
- **Business Registration:** Registration requirements for businesses contribute to the substantial amounts of red tape businesses face. For example, many companies are required to register separately and file different reports in each jurisdiction in which they operate.

In addition, Premiers direct responsible ministers to undertake immediate work with provincial and territorial Trade ministers to make progress on the other measures identified by the RCT established under the CFTA and identified at <https://www.cfta-alec.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2018/07/RCT-2018-2019-Work-Plan-List-of-Measures-Final-July-20-2018.pdf>.

Premiers recognize the importance of supporting consumer choice and reducing trade barriers with respect to alcoholic beverages, while ensuring a high level of social responsibility that considers the impact of alcohol consumption on communities. As a first step Premiers have agreed in principle to significantly increase personal use exemption limits when crossing provincial/territorial boundaries. Some jurisdictions may eliminate limits entirely, as is now the case in Manitoba and Alberta. Premiers emphasized these enhancements are intended to spur a broader range of products for Canadian consumers.

To further advance enhanced trade and consumer choice, Premiers also task their responsible ministers to, where feasible, move forward with work to: improve information and transparency in pricing and listing practices and enhance or develop e-commerce platforms within local markets. Premiers directed Ministers to consider options to increase consumer choice and access to alcoholic beverages, and ensure any proposed changes be done in a socially and fiscally responsible way.

Provinces and Territories are committed to ongoing collaborative work to support trade and investment across the country. The financial services sector, which is currently outside the CFTA, represents 6% of Canada's GDP. To this end, Premiers directed provincial and territorial trade Ministers to continue exploratory discussions towards bringing the financial services sector under the CFTA, in a manner that offers each Province and Territory the same or better treatment Canada offers its international trading partners.

In light of the economic uncertainty their governments are facing from abroad, Premiers have also directed provincial and territorial trade Ministers to actively promote the CFTA in order to strengthen and increase trade within Canada, promote the emergence of integrated Canadian supply chains, and ensure that manufacturers are more aware of Canadian suppliers.

Premiers welcome the Prime Minister's acceptance of their proposal for a meeting of First Ministers to take place this fall. Premiers agree these discussions will focus on the economy and in particular addressing productivity, competitiveness and improving trade.

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