



December 20, 2010

Southern Alberta business works to enhance beef exports to Asia

Edmonton... The Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA) is helping Cargill Meat Solutions to potentially triple beef exports to Asia by modernizing its High River plant with new technology to enhance efficiencies, improve food safety and lower overall operating costs.

A Growing Forward grant of up to \$3 million, distributed over two years, will help Cargill improve operational efficiencies at their High River plant and allow them to meet the ever-changing demands and requirements of export shipping. This also supports market diversity beyond North America. Meeting growing market demands is essential in helping to move Canada closer to being a beef supplier of choice.

"Canada is known for the quality of its beef products, and the Government of Canada is investing in innovation to increase our export markets and profitability for our beef industry," said Laurie Hawn, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence and Member of Parliament for Edmonton Centre. "Today's investment in Cargill Meat Solutions responds to world demand for high quality Canadian beef and further strengthens our position in international markets."

"A healthy and growing export sector is critical to the success of Alberta's livestock and meat industry," said Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Jack Hayden. "With ALMA's support, further modernization of the Cargill High River plant will provide a direct benefit to beef producers by increasing export opportunities to the Asian market."

"The project, coupled with Alberta's large volume of age-verified cattle, will result in improved logistics to export markets," said Scott Entz, Cargill Meat Solutions general manager. "We are committed to helping increase access of Alberta beef to Asia."

Gordon Cove, President and CEO of ALMA, says these types of investments help further the agency's strategic priorities. "The Cargill grant is part of a roadmap for working with industry to increase our competitiveness in global markets," said Cove.

Cargill's \$42-million investment to modernize their High River plant demonstrates that Alberta and Canada are quality locations for multinational organizations seeking to expand their Asian markets.

Headquartered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Cargill Limited is one of Canada's largest agricultural merchandisers and processors, employing over 10,000 people across Canada. Cargill Limited has business interests in meat, egg and oilseed processing, animal feed, salt, chocolate, natural gas, crop inputs, as well as grain handling, merchandising and milling. For more information, visit www.cargill.ca.

Growing Forward is a federal-provincial-territorial initiative that better positions the agriculture industry for success. The national vision is "*a profitable and innovative agriculture, agri-food and agri-products industry that seizes opportunities in responding to market demands, and contributes to the health and well-being of Canadians.*"

Together, the governments of Canada and Alberta are investing \$273 million over five years (2009-2013) for flexible and innovative programs for Alberta's agriculture industry. Alberta's Growing Forward goal is a stronger value-chain that thinks locally and grows globally.

The Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency contributes ideas, information and investment as it works with industry partners towards achieving the goal of a sustainable, profitable and internationally respected livestock and meat industry. For more information, visit www.alma.alberta.ca.

-30-

Background: Cargill Meat Solutions' High River plant.

Directed media inquiries to:

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Cargill Meat Solutions' High River plant

How will this project potentially increase the amount of beef exported to Asia?

The modernization of Cargill's High River plant includes incorporating proven technology into their warehousing system to lower the overall operating costs of the facility. The new technology will improve logistics by providing the production capabilities needed to meet export customer expectations.

What is ALMA's role in the Growing Forward initiative?

Through the Growing Forward initiative, \$9 million has been allocated for two programs for the 2010-11 fiscal year: \$7 million for the *Agri-Business Automation and Lean Manufacturing Program* and \$2 million for the *Agri-Business and Product Development Program*. The Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA) is responsible for the administration and delivery of these programs.

Agri-Business Automation and Lean Manufacturing Program

The *Agri-Business Automation and Lean Manufacturing Program* stimulates new investment and capital expansion to enhance Alberta's ability to supply agriculture and agri-food products. The program helps improve the productivity of producers and processors through cost reductions and/or increases in operational efficiencies. The program encourages the adoption of best practices, new technologies and state-of-the-art processes that improve food safety, food quality and increase value and market access.

Agri-Business and Product Development Program

The *Agri-Business and Product Development Program* stimulates new investment in value-added food and agri-product processing sectors. This program targets agri-food processing companies and producers with innovative, market-driven opportunities to commercialize a product, create a healthy or healthier product or expand their business.

Growing Forward

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There are 23 programs organized into 12 areas including: Bio-Security; Business Management Skills and Tools; Energy Efficiency; Entrepreneur Development; Food Safety; Leadership; Lean Manufacturing and Automation; Livestock Welfare; Product and Market Development; Stewardship Plans; Traceability; and Water Management. Alberta is also responsible for Growing Forward's Business Risk Management programs delivered by Agriculture Financial Services Corporation.

- 30 -

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