

## **Produce Industry will raise key issues on Parliament Hill from November 18-19**

**November 14, Ottawa** — On November 18 and 19, industry leaders representing the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) and Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) will gather in Ottawa to meet with Parliamentarians and civil servants to discuss the key issues currently affecting the Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable sector. With the total economic footprint of the produce sector around \$11.4 billion in real GDP for 2013, these meetings are meant to address key areas which impact the health of the industry and of Canadian consumers.

“It is crucial for the industry to sit down with key officials to discuss the issues that are currently impacting our sector” stated Ron Lemaire, CPMA President. “The federal government has yet to implement a PACA-like trust in response to the United States’ removal of PACA preferential Canadian access, and we need to raise awareness of the impact this will continue to have on our sector with MPs and government officials. We also need a national fruit and vegetable nutrition policy to drive Canadians to eat more fruits and vegetables for better health.”

“We have secured over 40 meetings with Members of Parliament from all parties, and will discuss matters that will not only improve trade, but also the health of Canadians,” added Anne Fowlie, CHC Executive Vice-President. “MPs need to be aware of the issues faced by the Canadian produce industry, and also to demonstrate a desire to effect positive change on their behalf. The CPMA and the CHC will both have a variety of members participating who represent the vast and diverse nature of the produce industry supply chain, from farmers to packers and retailers.”

Some of the key issues to be addressed this year include financial protection for produce sellers and a national fruit and vegetable nutrition policy. Studies show that only 26 per cent of the population aged 2 years and older consume the minimum number of daily servings of fruits and vegetables recommended for their respective age and gender<sup>i</sup>, and the produce industry is encouraging the government to take action to increase consumption for better health.

In addition to providing a diverse supply of healthy food for Canadian consumers, Canada’s fresh fruit and vegetable sector makes an important contribution to national economic output and employment. In 2013, the fresh fruit and vegetable sector supported 147,900 jobs and created \$11.4 billion in real GDP.

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The Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) is a not-for-profit organization representing companies that are active in the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables in Canada from the farm gate to the dinner plate. CPMA members cover various industries, integrating all segments of the fresh produce industry, including major growers, shippers, packers and marketers; importers and exporters; transportation and logistics, brokers, distributors and wholesalers; retailers, fresh cuts and foodservice distributors, operators and processors. CPMA is proud to represent over 760 international and Canadian members who are responsible for 90% of the fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada.



governments and individual producers.

The Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC), a voluntary, not-for-profit association, represents over 20,000 producers across Canada primarily involved in the production and packing of over 120 fruit and vegetable crops. Members include provincial and national horticultural commodity organizations as well as allied and service organizations, provincial

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<sup>i</sup> Black and Billette, “Do Canadians Meet Canada’s Food Guide’s Recommendations.”