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Canada

Agricultural Situation

This Week in Canadian Agriculture: Issue 34 2008

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Report Highlights:

Canada's 40th Parliamentary Session Opens * Canada's 15th Case of BSE Confirmed in
British Columbia * Potato Production Estimate Released

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Trade Report
Ottawa [CA1]
[CA]

This Week in Canadian Agriculture is a weekly review of Canadian agricultural industry developments of interest to the U.S. agricultural community. The issues summarized in this report cover a wide range of subject matter obtained from Canadian press reports, government press releases, and host country agricultural officials and representatives.

Disclaimer: Any press report summaries in this report are included to bring U.S. readership closer to the pulse of Canadian developments in agriculture. In no way do the views and opinions of these sources reflect USDA's, the U.S. Embassy's, or any other U.S. Government agency's point of view or official policy.

CANADA'S 40TH PARLIAMENTARY SESSION OPENS: Canada's 40th Parliamentary session opened on November 19th with Canada's Governor General delivering the Government's Speech from the Throne. The Throne Speech, which sets out the government's broad goals and the strategies to accomplish those goals, did not contain any surprises and reflects current economic concerns. The Conservative government has set out a 5 point strategy to ensuring Canada's economic security. The five areas of focus for the next Parliamentary session will be on (1) reforms to global finance, (2) ensuring sound budgeting, (3) securing jobs for families and communities, (4) expanding investment and trade, and (5) making government more effective. The Canadian government plans to expand investment and trade by working to modernize investment, competition and copyright laws while working with the United States to address shared challenges. Canada also plans to pursue trade agreements in Europe, Asia and the America's. *Comment:* *The Speech from the Throne did not address agricultural issues other than the pledge that the Canadian government would continue to support Canada's farmers by working towards delivering freedom of choice for grain marketing in Western Canada (removal of Canadian Wheat Board monopoly on barley and wheat) while strongly supporting Canada's supply-managed sectors at home and in international negotiations.* The full Throne Speech is available at the following website: <http://www.sft-ddt.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1364>

CANADA'S 15TH CASE OF BSE CONFIRMED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: On November 18, 2008 the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) confirmed bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in a seven-year-old dairy cow from British Columbia. No part of the animal's carcass entered the human food or animal feed systems. The animal's birth farm has been identified, and an investigation is underway. The CFIA is tracing the animal's herdmates at the time of birth and examining possible sources of infection. This case was detected through Canada's BSE surveillance program. The CFIA said that the program continues to play an important role in Canada's strategy to manage BSE. Canada remains a Controlled Risk country for BSE, as recognized by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). According to the CFIA, the latest case should not affect exports of Canadian cattle or beef.

POTATO PRODUCTION ESTIMATE RELEASED; MATCHES EARLIER POST FORECAST: On November 21, 2008 Statistics Canada released the first estimate of 2008 Canadian potato production. The agency indicated that total Canadian potato production fell 5.4% to 4.7 million metric tons (MMT) from 5.0 MMT last year. The estimate mirrored the forecast made last month in the [Potato and Potato Product Annual CA8076](#) issued by the Office of Agricultural Affairs which predicted a 5.4% year-to-year crop decline and a 2008 crop of 4.7 MMT. *Comment:* *Potato producers in Prince Edward Island (PEI), Canada's most important potato producing province that normally accounts for about 25% of total Canadian potato production, abandon over 1,000 hectares in 2008 due to extremely wet weather that caused the potatoes to rot in the field. PEI growers were offered federal/provincial financial aid to offset their losses (see page 12. CA8076). Elsewhere, production increases in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario failed to offset the combined production losses in the provinces of PEI, New Brunswick and Quebec resulting in the overall 5.4% decline in the 2008 crop.*

Exchange Rate: Noon rate, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2008 (Bank of Canada): U.S. Dollar = C\$1.2239

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