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Canada and B.C. seek proposals for beef market R&D fund

VICTORIA – British Columbia’s cattlemen have a new opportunity to reinvest in their industry through the Ranching Task Force’s \$5-million Beef Market Research and Development Program, announced federal Member of Parliament Cathy McLeod (Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo) and B.C. Agriculture Minister Don McRae.

“Canadian beef producers work hard to provide safe, high-quality products for families in Canada and around the world,” said MP McLeod, on behalf of federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. “By supporting farmers’ efforts to innovate and tap new markets, the Government of Canada is helping them remain competitive and profitable into the future.”

“This program is one of the most important commitments to come out of the Ranching Task Force,” said McRae. “It provides the support our ranchers need to open new markets and engage in forward-thinking business and product innovation. This work will ensure our beef industry remains a sustainable and prosperous part of B.C.’s economy.”

The program seeks project proposals that will create long-term industry benefits. Examples include new product development, domestic and emerging market research, trade missions, and producer and consumer education. The program is open to all producer and processors groups, individuals, businesses, post-secondary research institutions, marketing organizations, co-operatives and non-governmental organizations.

“Our industry needs a launch pad for getting new ideas off the ground and facilitating research that is tailored to B.C.’s unique market conditions,” said B.C. Cattlemen’s Association general manager Kevin Boon. “With the funding support of the federal and provincial governments, the strategic investments made through this program will create more value for beef produced in British Columbia.”

The governments have invested \$5 million in B.C.’s ranching industry to develop new marketing and innovation opportunities alongside policy and regulatory reform. There are over 4,000 ranches across the province contributing \$250 million to the provincial economy.

The Ranching Task Force was announced in May 2009 to identify key issues and opportunities facing the ranching industry in B.C., and to make recommendations to ensure a strong, vibrant and sustainable industry for future generations. In May 2010 the Province announced a four-point action plan to improve the competitive environment of B.C.’s cattle sector.

For more information on the fund or the application process, visit:
<http://www.ranchingtaskforce.gov.bc.ca/>

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