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E-mail: knummi@cattlefeeders.ca

Telephone: 403-250-2509 | Toll free: 1-800-363-8598

Fax: 403-209-3255 | Website: www.cattlefeeders.ca

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John Weekes is NCFA's Point Man on Trade

John Weekes is an expert in international trade policy and a senior business advisor at Bennett Jones in Ottawa. During his career, John has been chief negotiator for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Canada's ambassador to the World Trade Organization (WTO), chair of the WTO General Council, and ambassador to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) during the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations.

John has been a huge asset to the National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) in providing strategic advice to industry and government on trade matters. With the re-signing of a recent service contract with NCFA, John will be assisting NCFA in its advocacy efforts by providing the following services through to February of 2020:

- Proactively advance NCFA's priorities on all pertinent trade files and respond to current and emerging international trade challenges and opportunities through expert analysis, informed opinion, strategic advice, technical guidance, and development and dialogue on alternative scenarios.
- Strengthen the essential connections between our beef industry and the Federal government, to establish stronger common purpose and greater cohesion on trade-related objectives and strategies. These connections strengthen negotiating positions that come from a shared commitment to specific trade goals and objectives.
- Develop a more informed, focussed, and strategic approach to influencing and impacting current and future bi-lateral and multi-lateral trade negotiations; and secure new market opportunities and expand existing markets by reducing and/or eliminating: tariff barriers to trade, non-tariff barriers, and various scientific or technical barriers.
- Identify, adapt, and adopt potential new and innovative methods of securing Canadian beef products into new markets
- Leveraging his professional and personal network to establish contact and secure meetings with key national and international decision-makers, and to attend any such meetings as required or requested, to enable NCFA to effectively communicate its various trade priorities and provide opportunity to impact the broader trade agenda.
- Engage in government and/or industry discussions and meetings of the Market Access Secretariat (MAS), the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), the Beef Value Chain Round Table (BVCRT), the Canadian Beef Advisors (CBA), the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), and other trade-related stakeholder organizations or associations.
- Appear before Parliamentary Standing Committees and other tribunals or forums to give expert testimony on trade issues of importance to NCFA.
- Participate in NCFA board and staff meetings as required or requested, to report on various trade files, provide expert opinion and advice, and discuss ongoing trade developments.
- Provide input on articles, opinion editorials, position statements, policies, and key messages on trade-related topics to influence the broader debate over Canadian trade issues and advance NCFA's trade agenda.

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John's services will largely focus on NCFA's trade objectives as they relate to NAFTA, CPTPP, CETA, access of Canadian beef to China, a potential Canada-China FTA, unrestricted access to Japan, and wider access to Southeast Asia. His expertise is vital to NCFA in securing the conditions required for you to develop profitable relationships with your customers across the globe and we look forward to supporting him in these efforts.

Sincerely,

Bryan D. Walton
President and CEO