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NEWS RELEASE  
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May 1, 2008

MINISTER ANNOUNCES COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI -- Agriculture Minister Neil LeClair today announced the establishment of the Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-food on Prince Edward Island. The commission will articulate a long-term vision for agriculture and agri-food and recommend an implementation strategy. The commission's final report is expected in December of this year.

"In establishing the commission, the provincial government is responding to requests from the industry for new directions that will guide the development of agriculture in the coming years," said Mr. LeClair. "It is apparent that the current commodity model of production is not working for producers in this province. We need a unique Island approach to issues that are facing the agriculture sector nationally and globally. We are in a unique position to succeed, and the new Commission will help to define that approach."

The commission will be co-chaired by Rory Francis and Dr. Ed Tyrchniewicz. Francis is a former deputy minister of agriculture and is currently executive director of the Prince Edward Island BioAlliance, a network of leading edge biosciences businesses and research organizations.

Dr. Tyrchniewicz is currently associate dean of the Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba and is a former professor of agricultural economics. Members of the commission will include representatives from the industry and the community.

Mr. LeClair said that the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, has pledged his support and cooperation.

The federal government will be providing financial and technical support to the commission.

The commission will be consulting broadly with all sectors of the industry, and the public will also be given an opportunity to provide input.

Mr. LeClair said that while the commission begins its work, the provincial government will continue to work with some sectors of the industry to deal with the current financial difficulties. He will be meeting with representatives of farm organizations next week to discuss specific concerns and issues.

"A clear sense of direction will help our agriculture sector to diversify and thrive," said Mr. LeClair. "The Island has many strengths in this particular area, and it's up to government to help industry define a new and more profitable direction."

BACKGROUNDER

Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-food on Prince Edward Island May 1, 2008

The Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-food on Prince Edward Island The Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-food

has been convened to articulate a vision for agriculture and agri-food in Prince Edward Island and recommend steps to implement and achieve the vision.

#### Co-chairs

The Commission will be co-chaired by Rory Francis, Executive Director of the Prince Edward Island BioAlliance and former Deputy Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Dr. Ed Tyrchniewicz, an Agricultural Economist who is currently Associate Dean of the Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba and Professor in the Department of Supply Chain Management.

#### Appointment of Members

Members of the Commission will be appointed by the co-chairs and the Project Management Team (consisting of representatives from government and industry) by May 16, 2008 and will include - predominantly - producers, as well as representatives of the food processing sector, agricultural support industries, and community representatives. The general public will be invited to provide input into the process via a moderated online forum.

#### Project Secretariat

In carrying out its mandate, the Commission will have access to professional and administrative support staff in the form of a Project Secretariat. The Project Secretariat will provide research and coordination assistance and report to the co-chairs and members.

#### Background Document

Under the oversight of the co-chairs, the Secretariat will develop a background document on the current state of agriculture and agri-food on Prince Edward Island. This document will serve as the foundation for the work of the Commission. It is anticipated that this document will be prepared by June 16, 2008 and will be made available to the Commission and the general public.

#### The Process

The Commission process, which will be undertaken between late-June and October, will be designed to allow stakeholder organizations to be engaged, formally, as organizations; at the same time, the process will allow individuals, while potentially affiliated with organizations, to speak with their own voices. The general public will also have the opportunity to become involved via the online forum.

#### Draft Report

The target date for the draft report of the Commission is October 14, 2008.

#### Final Report

The Commission will present the Final Report to the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Agriculture by December 5, 2008.

#### Implementation and Accountability

A clear expectation is that the Final Report will include a plan for the implementation of the report's recommendations. This implementation process should also recommend accountability measures to ensure that all stakeholders, including government, processors, retailers,

consumers and producers play their optimal role to ensure the implementation of the report's recommendations.

#### Co-chairs

Edward W. Tyrchniewicz P.Ag.

Trained as an Agricultural Economist (PhD - Purdue University), Ed has worked in universities for 40 years with almost 25 of those years being in various academic administrative positions. While at the University of Manitoba (1967-88), he was a Professor of Agricultural Economics, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, and Founding Director of the Transport Institute. He then served as Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry at the University of Alberta (1988-96).

Since taking early retirement from the University of Alberta in 1997, he has held a variety of appointments, including Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Sustainable Development (1996-99), founding Executive Director of the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council (1997), and Adjunct Professor (Agricultural Economics) at the University of Manitoba from 1998 to 2004. He is currently Associate Dean of the Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba.

He is also involved in consulting and public service advising in the areas of agricultural policy, natural resource management, and organizational management and capacity building. Some of these activities include:

- Member of Agriculture and Agrifood Climate Change Table and Member of Integrative Climate Change Table (1998 - 2001)
  - Chair of Public Inquiry and co-author of Report of Livestock Stewardship Panel, Province of Manitoba (2000)
  - Member of Science Advisory Panel on AAFC Science Strategy for Agriculture and Agrifood Canada (2003)
  - Member of an international Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Development in China that advised the Chinese government on agricultural policy (2003 - 04)
  - Chair of the Board of the Manitoba Livestock Manure Management Initiative (2004 - 06)
  - Prepared a report on Vision and Strategic Direction Options for the Canadian Agricultural Sector, Canadian Agrifood Policy Institute (2005)
  - Chair of the Agricultural Policy Framework Review Panel (2005 - 06)
  - Project manager of the Canadian Agrifood Policy Institute initiative on the interface between food and health (2006 - 07)
- Rory Francis has 25 years experience in professional, management and leadership roles in the public and private sectors. As an experienced senior executive, Mr. Francis has led transformative change in several public sector organizations encompassing economic and social policy, programs and services.

Mr. Francis is a native of Prince Edward Island. He earned a B.Sc. in geology and chemistry from Mount Allison University in 1975 and worked for three years as a consultant petroleum geologist in Alberta and

British Columbia before returning to PEI as a groundwater geologist in 1978.

From 1979 to 1981 he completed an M.Sc. in Hydrogeology at the University of Waterloo and subsequently worked as Provincial Hydrogeologist and Director of Water Resources with the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Since 1991 Mr. Francis has served as Deputy Minister in several PEI provincial government departments, including Environment, Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Health and Social Services. He was responsible for the Agriculture portfolio from 1993 to 2000.

In 2003, Rory was seconded to the Department of Development and Technology to develop a strategic plan with the board of Slemon Park Corporation, PEI's aerospace industry cluster.

Since 2004 he has been Executive Director of the Prince Edward Island BioAlliance Inc, a not-for-profit network of bioscience businesses and research organizations. The role of the BioAlliance is to coordinate the work of industry, research, academia and governments to accelerate the growth of the province's emerging bioscience cluster.

Mr. Francis is a member of the Canadian BioAccord and serves as a board member with the PEI Institute for Human Health Research.

Mr. Francis is an avid naturalist. He is a Warden with St. Peter's Cathedral and resides in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island with his wife Ann. Their three children have left the nest.

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For more information, contact Wayne MacKinnon, Agriculture by email at [wemackinnon@gov.pe.ca](mailto:wemackinnon@gov.pe.ca) or phone (902) 368-4888.

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