

The Honourable Judy A. Sgro,
Chair, Standing Committee on International Trade
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons, Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Submitted Via: ciit@parl.gc.ca

June 2, 2021

Re: Committee Study of Bill C-216, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management)

Dear Ms. Sgro,

The Grain Growers of Canada (GGC) is a national association representing over 65,000 export-oriented grain, pulse and oilseed farmers across the country. We are joined by our sector colleagues via the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) in expressing deep concern regarding the devastating impacts that Bill C-216 will have on our sector, and the Canadian economy, if passed.

Over 90% of Canada's farmers are dependent on exports. Agri-food exports not only support Canadian farmers and rural communities, they contribute to the national economy. The sector contributes over \$142 billion (6.7%) to Canada's GDP annually and employs 2.3 million people. If Bill C-216 passes, our industry's contributions to the Canadian economy, and future opportunities for growth in this area, would be in jeopardy.

Bill C-216 would essentially tie the hands of Canadian negotiators, putting Canada at a significant disadvantage when entering into negotiations with other countries. Legislating the exclusion of products or sectors from trade negotiations not only damages Canada's relationships with key trading partners, it also sets a dangerous precedent – one which threatens Canada's position in the international marketplace.

The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, has said: "trade remains crucial to the prosperity of Canadians." But this Bill sends the opposite message, especially at a time when Canada should be focused on a post-pandemic economic recovery plan.

As such, we ask that the Committee oppose Bill C-216 to allow Canada to preserve its ability to negotiate comprehensive trade agreements that help secure our long-term economic success with the broad national interest in mind.

GGC would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee as part of their study on this important piece of legislation. In the interim, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Director, Erin Gowirluk (egowriluk@ggc-pgc.ca/343.549.4767).

Regards,



Andre Harpe
Chair

CC: Tracy Gray, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on International Trade
Simon-Pierre Savard-Trembley, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on International Trade