**2025 CAES policy brief competition**

**Background**

Stakeholders along the agriculture and agrifood sector are having to adapt to an increasing number of shocks amid growing uncertainty to keep producing, processing, and retailing food. At the same time, Canadians have also experienced rapid inflation and rising food insecurity. These shocks will likely intensify and the agri-food supply chain will need to continue to adapt to changing market conditions while continuing to improve its social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)’s Minister has asked for a series of briefings on issues of instability that are affecting the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. As part of this series you are to prepare one such briefing. You may select any current issue related to instability of your choosing, including but not limited to: impacts of climate change, greenhouse gas emission reductions, tariffs, innovation, food retail, productivity, or food waste reduction. The Minister would like to see two to three options for potential interventions focusing on a particular issue the sector is facing. He seeks a recommendation on the best option to pursue when taking into consideration economic efficiency, government budgets and stakeholder impacts.

**Instructions**

You have been given the responsibility to write the briefing note for the Minister. The briefing note should not exceed three (3) pages and should be at a level that will help the Minister make an informed decision on whether additional measures should be in place. You may pick any issue of instability that the agriculture and agri-food sector is facing, or may face. If you need a suggestion, there are some examples of topics below.

Additional background information could be annexed if needed (please keep it short) and data may be used to show impacts. For example, a pertinent graph could be included in the annex that would not fit in the briefing note.

A briefing note consists of several sections which are described in the attached template. Each section of the note has a specific purpose, so read the instructions on the template carefully. The Purpose section provides a one sentence overview of the topic. The Context section is used to provide background information on the subject. The Considerations section can be used to highlight how the issue at hand may have linkages to other issues and policies across the department in particular and government in general, stakeholder reactions/impacts, economic phenomenon, and other practical considerations. The Options section can be used to provide an overview of all of your proposed options, typically, it is best to list up to 3 options. The Recommendation section defends your position on the measures (options) you are proposing or why the current measures in place are sufficient. The Summary section is best dealt with once you have completed the main body of the briefing note and has to bring out the key messages and recommendation.

Please include references for any work cited in the Annex at the end of the template. It is preferred if you use footnotes for your in-text citations. References will not be included in the page count for the briefing note.

**Please use attached Briefing Note template and submit to Jennifer Vignola at jennifer.vignola@agr.gc.ca by x January xx, 2025 2 P.M. EST**

**Topic examples**

Here are some examples of topics with references to help get you started:

**Topic 1: Export restrictions and the Canadian Agri-Food Sector**

The success of the Canadian agriculture sector depends heavily on our ability to export to other countries and Canada is one of the world's largest food exporters. In 2023, Canada exported nearly $99.1 billion in agriculture and food products (including raw agricultural materials, fish and seafood, and processed foods). Given the importance of exports to the sector, potential disruptions to trade such as transportation disruptions, diseases and other trade barriers such as tariffs can impact producers and supply chains.

<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/sector/overview>

<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/international-trade>

**Topic 2: Productivity and innovation in Food Processing**

Strong productivity—which leads to faster growth, more jobs and higher wages—is an important way to protect the economy from the risks of high inflation. Food processing is the largest manufacturing employer in Canada. Food processing was highlighted as a sector with high growth potential by the Sector Engagement Tables.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/241209/dq241209c-eng.htm>

<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/department/initiatives/sector-engagement-tables>

<https://bpb-ca-c1.wpmucdn.com/sites.uoguelph.ca/dist/0/134/files/2022/01/Size-and-Productivity-in-the-Canadian-Food-Processing-Industry.pdf>

<https://www.ivey.uwo.ca/media/3779172/sparling-cheney-food-manufacturing-performance-full-report-march-10.pdf>

**Topic 3: Extreme weather events**

Climate change is known to increase both the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, such as flooding and droughts. These extreme events can create increased unpredictability and may result in loss or relocation of livestock and damage to crops; and increased frequency and intensity of storms could result in power outages, affecting livestock heating and cooling systems as well as automated feeding and milking systems*.*

[https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/environment/climate-change/climate-change-impacts-agriculture](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fagriculture.canada.ca%2Fen%2Fenvironment%2Fclimate-change%2Fclimate-change-impacts-agriculture&data=05%7C02%7Claura.stortz%40AGR.GC.CA%7Cc8ba6b079edc43175fc108dd1ebbdc5b%7C9da98bb118574cc387519a49e35d24cd%7C0%7C0%7C638700514400771699%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=mZ4ZPys6392e%2FrC%2BA1PXNzEHOkL5zl8rtVSjdsJV400%3D&reserved=0)

**Topic 4: Inflation and Food Prices**

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the most relevant measure of the cost of living for most Canadians because it is made up of goods and services that Canadians typically buy. Economically vulnerable households have less capacity to adjust to rapid food price inflation. Canadians are facing many pressures that affect their food security.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/241010/dq241010a-eng.htm>

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1810000401>

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00002-eng.htm>