

## Why We Don't Want CETA



The Canadian government is currently negotiating an agreement with the European Union (EU), called the ***Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement*** or CETA for short. CETA is the farthest reaching trade agreement Canada has ever negotiated. For the first time, an international trade agreement reaches beyond the federal level and into provincial, territorial and municipal jurisdictions, giving corporations more access and control over governments and government entities than ever before. CETA has deeply negative implications for the future of our family farms, our rural communities and our democracy. **CETA is good for corporations and bad for Canadians.**

**If adopted with the current European positions included, CETA will:**

**Severely restrict farmers' ability to save, reuse, exchange and sell seed.**

CETA adds precautionary seizure provisions to intellectual property rights' enforcement. This means that farmers accused of having a patented gene in their crops or seed could lose their farms, crops, equipment and cash – simply for *alleged* infringement. The Agreement would extend precautionary seizure provisions to third parties. For example, the owner of a seed cleaning operation whose

customer is accused of patent infringement could also have his/her property seized. These expanded intellectual property rights enforcement tools would increase corporate control of our farms, increase seed costs, and destroy farmers' autonomy.

**Increase corporate patent rights for drugs and chemicals.**

The Europeans are calling for monopoly patent rights to be extended by the length of time it takes the regulator to approve a product, which would create pressure for hasty, and perhaps dangerous approvals. They also want to add more time to these patent rights if a minor use for a drug or chemical is found. Any data the company supplied to the regulator would also remain exclusive to the company for 10 to 13 years. These measures would hamper generic manufacturers and add huge costs to purchasers – including our Medicare system where drugs make up 50% of costs. CETA would transfer even more of our healthcare dollars to big pharmaceutical companies.

**Undermine federal, provincial and municipal local purchasing policies.**

CETA would forbid all government entities including schools, hospitals, universities and municipalities from favouring local or domestic businesses. Governments would no longer be able to support local providers of goods and services through local procurement policies. For example, a government that wanted to support local agriculture by promoting local food would

not be able to implement a policy favouring government purchasing of local food over imported food. This would be subject to certain thresholds -- some provinces are suggesting as low as \$25,000.

**Lead to reduction in so-called "production and trade distorting domestic support".**

CETA signatories would agree to cooperate at the World Trade Organization (WTO) to reduce agriculture safety net measures. These negotiations also lay the groundwork and justification for dismantling our supply management system in the future.

Proponents of CETA argue that it would open up the European market to Canada's genetically-modified (GM) crops and hormone-treated beef. This is false. Canadian negotiators are only pushing for EU GM contamination level standards to increase from 0.01% to 0.1%. If Canada does obtain more market access, CETA also specifically exempts GM organisms. The European market has been closed to hormone-treated beef due to health concerns, and a trade agreement will not change consumers' opinions. If Canada wants access to the European beef market we could simply adopt equivalent standards and eliminate growth hormones from our production system.

**Canadian agriculture has  
nothing to gain  
from CETA and  
everything to lose**

## Our democracy is at risk

The CETA agreement is being negotiated behind closed doors. The vast majority of Canadians have not been consulted. Both the EU and Canadian governments refuse to disclose their draft texts as each round of negotiation is completed. In spite of this we have been able to obtain leaked copies of the text.

The corporate rights claimed under CETA would be enforced via the infamous North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Chapter 11 investor protection mechanisms which give corporations the right to sue governments for lost profits. CETA goes further and also states that governments would be responsible for financially compensating corporations during times of war and civil strife.

Giving corporations the right to sue governments at every level for making decisions in the interest of Canadian citizens is profoundly undemocratic. Ultimately, CETA is a corporate bill of rights that would severely limit the power of our elected officials to act on our behalf. It is unlikely that the Agreement would lead to increased trade between Canada and the EU or in more market access for Canadian products and companies. Instead, CETA would limit the role of government to work in the public interest.

**CETA is good for corporations and bad for citizens**

## What you can do to protect your seed, your farm, and your democratic rights

from being bargained away in the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA):

**1. Join and/or donate to the National Farmers Union to work on your behalf.** Family farm memberships are \$195.00. Non-farmers can join as associate members for \$65.00.

Send memberships or donations by mail to: 2717 Wentz Avenue Saskatoon, SK S7K 4B6 or go online at [www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca)

**2. Sign the petition to stop CETA.** Download and print a copy from <http://www.nfu.ca/petitions/CETA-mar2011.pdf>

**3. Write, phone, fax or email your federal leaders** to voice your concerns, including:

- The Prime Minister, the Minister of International Trade, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and your own Member of Parliament
- The leaders of the opposition parties and their critics for Trade and Agriculture.

Correspondence to Members of Parliament does not require a stamp. The address is: House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

To send an email, go to [www.parl.gc.ca](http://www.parl.gc.ca) and click on "Senators and Members" to find email addresses.

**4. Write, phone, fax or email your provincial and municipal leaders** to voice your concerns, including:

- The Premier of your Province.
- Your municipal, school, and hospital representatives.

Send a copy of your letters to the NFU at 2717 Wentz Avenue, Saskatoon, SK S7K 4B6 or email to [nfu@nfu.ca](mailto:nfu@nfu.ca)

**5. Get the word out about the risks of CETA.** Inform your fellow citizens by email, Facebook and other social media, phone and fax!

**For more information** on CETA from the NFU and our allies in the Trade Justice Network:

**National Farmers Union**  
[www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca)

Listen to NFU President Terry Boehm's presentation on CETA from the 2010 NFU Convention [http://www.nfu.ca/mp3/2011\\_CETA.mp3](http://www.nfu.ca/mp3/2011_CETA.mp3)

**Trade Justice Network**  
[www.tradejustice.ca](http://www.tradejustice.ca)

**Open Civil Society Declaration on CETA** <http://tradejustice.ca/en/section/22>

