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# News Release

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For immediate release

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA SUPPORTS FARMERS BY INVESTING IN ANIMAL HEALTH

**WINNIPEG, Manitoba, May 15, 2010** – Canadian farmers are proud to produce safe, healthy foods for kitchen tables across Canada and around the world and to help ensure this continues, the Government of Canada is investing up to \$2 million to prevent and contain animal diseases, Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced today. The funding for the Canadian Animal Health Coalition for the West Hawk Lake Zoning Initiative will help to monitor the movement of animals and agricultural products between eastern and western Canada.

“Our farmers are world renowned for the quality and safety of their products and this investment will maintain and build on that strong reputation,” said Minister Ritz. “This initiative allows Canada to once again prove to our international trading partners that we’re ready and able to get on top of any potential animal disease problems quickly and effectively.”

“West Hawk Lake is a vital point that links Western and Eastern Canada,” said Minister of Public Safety and Regional Minister for Manitoba, Vic Toews, who made the announcement with Minister Ritz. “Monitoring this access point will help us to ensure we’re able to keep Canadian livestock healthy and productive.”

The West Hawk Lake facility will shift from a successful pilot project to a 24/7 fully operational facility with the ability to track and control movement in case of an emergency where response time is critical. This project is considered a control point on the only major highway and railways connecting eastern and western Canada, near the Manitoba/Ontario border. The West Hawk Lake Zoning Initiative provides the capability to contain an outbreak in one of the two zones. This will ensure, in the unlikely event of a disease outbreak, that product from the other zone is safe and ready for consumption in domestic and international markets.

“The West Hawk Lake Zoning Initiative is another step towards national food traceability,” said Canadian Animal Health Coalition’s Executive Director, Mark Beaven. “It will improve Canada’s capacity to proactively address animal industry food safety and animal health issues.”

“Every day dozens of trucks roll through this area to deliver products Canadians put in their grocery carts,” said Greg Rickford, Member of Parliament for Kenora. “West Hawk Lake is proud to serve as an important safeguard for the health and welfare of our food supply and our livestock industry.”



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Funding for this initiative comes from the Government of Canada's Canadian Integrated Food Safety Initiative, under Growing Forward, which focuses on assisting the sector to respond to growing consumer demands for improved food safety on the farm and to equip the sector to manage risks proactively.

Agriculture is a core economic driver in Canada, and that is why the Government of Canada is also making investments in the agriculture sector through Canada's Economic Action Plan. For more information, visit [www.actionplan.gc.ca](http://www.actionplan.gc.ca).

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