

Semi-annual General Meeting of the Fédération des producteurs de lait du Québec **Marcel Groleau reviews his seven years as Chairman**

Quebec City, November 24, 2011/CNW – Addressing the participants at the Semi-annual General Meeting of the Fédération des producteurs de lait du Québec (FPLQ), Marcel Groleau delivered his last speech as Chairman of the FPLQ, after seven years as the organization’s Chairman and 20 years of dedication to the Quebec and Canadian dairy sector. He took the opportunity to reiterate the importance of collective tools in agriculture. **“Our sector’s success continues to depend on solidarity among dairy producers. Supply management and collective marketing are more necessary than ever so that producers can obtain fair returns from the marketplace without the need to rely on subsidies, enabling them to make a sustainable contribution to the vitality of our economy,”** he said.

Marcel Groleau is pleased that by acting together dairy producers have succeeded in obtaining a fair price that enables them to invest in and develop their businesses. He also emphasized that the dairy sector has progressed in a spirit of cooperation with the milk processors. **“We need to work together, and our history of doing so made us the agricultural sector that had the most positive dossier at the Pronovost Commission. Our achievements are clear evidence that collective marketing provides us with the tools to develop and serve our markets. We have developed our products based on market signals,”** he said, citing the examples of artisanal cheese and organic products.

Mr. Groleau is also pleased with the strong political support shown for the model: **“The Government of Canada and the Quebec Government have clearly and repeatedly maintained their commitment to protect supply management in bilateral and multilateral international trade agreements.”** Referring to Canada’s participation in the negotiation of a Trans-Pacific free trade agreement, he stated that those who claim that the abandonment of supply management is a key demand for countries like the United States to allow Canada to join the negotiations, are wrong. He said that many other trade issues are on the table in these negotiations.

Marcel Groleau, who will become President of the Union des producteurs agricoles, also took the opportunity to emphasize his passion for agriculture. **“I am moving to the UPA to advance the cause of agriculture,”** he concluded.

The Fédération des producteurs de lait du Québec represents the province’s 13,500 milk producers and 6,300 dairy farms. Quebec dairy farmers produce 3 billion litres of milk annually and generate total farm cash receipts of more than \$2 billion. The dairy sector accounts for more than 32% of Quebec’s total farm receipts. It also provides 81,000 jobs and pays \$1.2 billion in taxes. Together with the processing sector, it contributes \$5.1 billion to the Canadian Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

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