

# Old divides emerge

*If you put representatives of different countries at the table and throw out an issue, you are going to get arguments.*



Ag Notes  
CALVIN DANIELS

That is simply the reality in a world where countries all have agendas based on what they deem as best for them. Even when it's just major trading partners such as Canada and the United States with a trade agreement inked and in place, there are near-constant disputes which require solving. So imagine the problems of making new regulations at World Trade Organization talks.

The chance of any issue not resulting in protracted debate and outright argument is almost nil. Even when a country's negotiator might be willing to concede a point, they are unlikely to volunteer to do it, choosing instead to try and get some concession they want for any agreement on another point.

In the end, the regulations coming out of WTO are rarely wins or losses for anyone. By nature, the rules agreed to come largely by building consensus. Consensus is almost always a watered-down creation, where everybody at the table gives and takes until some middle ground all can live with is achieved.

It's a positive that in the end, some regulation that might prevent some trade disputes also means one is completely satisfied. So, when a deal is made, Canadian farmers, in some cases, will think they have gained a little ground on one front but may also feel they lost ground in another area. So, for example, grain farmers might see a gain, while dairy farmers were the pawn sacrificed in the deal.

Given the larger political realities of the world – you can see a return to smaller coun-

tries as old divides emerge – and of course, the tension created by the Russian invasion of Ukraine has to be putting added pressure on what is achieved through WTO talks.

In a recent release Greg Northey, Vice President of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance and head of CAFTA's delegation to MC12 in Geneva, issued a statement regarding outcomes at the first WTO Ministerial Meeting in over five years.

"Overall, amid rising global tensions and ever-increasing food security challenges, Canada's agri-food exporters were expecting meaningful outcomes on agriculture at MC12."

And some gains in terms of "a Declaration on Trade and Food Security, a Declaration on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and commitments to reform and strengthen the rules-based trading system including its dispute settlement mechanism" it will never be easy to create agreement on sweeping change.

The nature of so many voices makes such progress almost impossible, yet the process of negotiation, building a better atmosphere for trade bit by bit, is still too important a process to ever abandon.

- CALVIN DANIELS

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Disclaimer: opinions expressed are those of the writer.



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## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to advise the communities where this notice is published that Canadian National Railway Company (CN) recently filed its Application with the Canadian Transportation Agency (the "Agency") for the construction and operation of a spur track, located within the boundaries of the Rural Municipality of Prairie Rose No. 309 and the Rural Municipality of Mount Hope No. 279, in the province of Saskatchewan. The spur will connect CN's existing Watrous Subdivision mainline with the BHP Canada Inc. Potash mine. Approval for the establishment of the Potash mine was approved under Saskatchewan's *Environmental Assessment Act* in 2011.

This new spur is required to provide direct rail service to BHP Canada Inc., while supporting the future expansion of the mine and improving service efficiencies to the mine.

CN's application was filed with the Agency pursuant to section 98 of the *Canada Transportation Act, S.C., 1996, c.10* which reads:

"The Agency may, on application by the railway company, grant the approval if it considers that the location of the railway line is reasonable, taking into consideration requirements for railway operations and services and the interests of the localities that will be affected by the line."

CN invites you to review CN's application and relevant documentation available at [cnjansenrailspur.ca](http://cnjansenrailspur.ca). Persons who wish to present their views may do so no later than thirty (30) days from the date of this notice by completing the web form located at [cnjansenrailspur.ca](http://cnjansenrailspur.ca). CN will report to the Agency all comments received through the web form. Alternatively, you may also file your submissions directly with the Agency. A submission to the Agency, if made, should be received by the Secretary of the Agency no later than thirty (30) days from the date of this notice, or if sent by certified mail, postmarked not later than thirty (30) days from the date of this notice at the following address:

**Secretary**  
**Canadian Transportation Agency**  
15 Eddy Street  
Gatineau, Quebec, J8X 4B3  
[info@otc-cta.gc.ca](mailto:info@otc-cta.gc.ca)

Persons who require additional information regarding the CTA process may contact the Agency at 1-888-222-2592.

All submissions filed with the Agency must be copied to CN at the following address:

**Eric Harvey**  
**Counsel**  
**Law Department**  
**Canadian National Railway Company**  
935 de la Gauchetiere Street West  
Montreal, Quebec, H3B 2M9  
Phone: (514) 399-5774

CN carries more than 300 million tons annually of natural resources, manufactured products and finished goods. Its extensive reach across North America is due to its fully integrated rail and other transportation services, involving unique supply chain partnerships. CN also contributes to social and environmental advancement through distinctive public action and programs. It enables global trade by helping customers win in their markets.

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