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The past decade has produced conflicting conditions in Canada/United States relations. It has been a period of significant reduction in trade barriers through formal trade agreements: CUSTA, NAFTA and the Uruguay Round of GATT. But it has also been a period of significant trade disputes. In the grains sector, relations have been particularly strained leading to an agreement to limit cross border trade in wheat and barley from August, 1994 to August, 1995. A Canada/United States Joint Commission on Grains was established to attempt to resolve the grains disputes as a means of improving trading relations and of achieving the maximum benefits from trade.

One of the contributing factors to policy and trade disputes is lack of knowledge and understanding of the policy instruments in both countries. As a means of reducing the significance of this factor, this publication provides policy relevant information on the grains disputes. A group of agricultural economists with substantial policy experience prepared papers, discussed the issues in a workshop, and contributed to this book in order to improve policy and program knowledge and create an environment of greater policy harmony. This is the first of several information releases planned on Canada/United States policy and trade relations.

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