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## **Madly Off in All Directions – The Pursuit of Preferential Trade Agreements by North American Governments**

### **Abstract**

Ryan Cardwell

*Associate Professor, Department of Agribusiness and Agricultural Economics, University of Manitoba, Canada*

The article explores the reasons that governments in North America are engaged in negotiating preferential trade agreements with some of their most significant trading partners. Lack of progress in the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization provides the major incentive to find alternatives to broad-based multilateral progress in trade liberalization. Differences in both the ambition and the constraints associated with preferential agreements relative to multilateral rounds are explored. The results suggest that there are both potential benefits and potential losses associated with pursuing preferential agreements.

Keywords: multilateral, negotiations, preferential agreements, Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, Trans-Pacific Partnership