



LONG-TERM THINKING FOR TODAY'S ISSUES

March 25, 2020

Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0C5

Re: Border Restrictions - Impact on SAWP and TFWP

Dear Minister Bibeau,

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) is an Accredited Farm Organization representing the interests of over 4,000 farm families in Ontario who are called to the vocation of farming. CFFO policy promotes economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable farming, advocating that farmers receive fair return for their production and stewardship efforts.

The CFFO is writing again to urge you to act quickly to ensure our Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) and Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) employees are able to be transported and admitted to Canada as soon as possible.

This is a critical time for our fruit and vegetable farm operations to begin spring work and ensure the crop for the coming season. Even a delay of a week getting workers here to Canada will require a further two weeks of isolation upon arrival, pushing the time until mid-April or later before workers can be at work.

Our farms depend on both the SAWP and TFWP for access to workers now and through the coming growing season. These workers are trained and have experience in the work they do here in Canada. Many return year after year to the same or similar jobs. They cannot be replaced by local Canadian workers. It is important that vital industries, including agriculture and food processing, are able to continue to function as smoothly as possible despite this ongoing crisis.

We request that the government work to ensure that workers can come to Canada and be working on farms as quickly as possible. This will secure the vital spring season, support economic activity and protect our food sovereignty in these difficult times.

Thank you for your timely attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Scharringa', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ed Scharringa, President
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

cc: Hon. Filomena Tassi, MP, Minister of Labour, Canada
Hon. Carla Qualtrough, MP, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion
Hon. Ernie Hardeman, MPP, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario