



*Long-Term Thinking  
for Today's Issues*

## **Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario**

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February 12, 2008

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
Legislative Assembly of Ontario  
Toronto, ON M5S 1B3

Dear Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:

### **Re: The Case for Long Term Industry Solutions**

The Provincial Council of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) would like to take this time to thank the Ontario Government for showing its support for Ontario's pork, beef and horticulture sectors. Providing emergency support in a time of great need for the industry is the first step in preserving these industries.

Moving forward, we hope to see the Provincial Government working with industry and producer associations to address the long-term problems that have been created by the following factors:

- A.) The low value of the American dollar, which has seriously affected the trade position of these industries
- B.) The sudden rise in feed prices, following an extended period of low prices, which in turn led to rapid expansion in the industry, has seriously impacted on the business model of many livestock producers.
- C.) For the pork sector, it faces the future difficulties of Country of Origin Labelling in the United States and the potential closure of Maple Leaf's Burlington slaughter plant.
- D.) The processing sector is struggling to cope with the regulatory burdens it faces. For example, the Ontario beef sector is continuing to struggle with the additional costs of specified risk material disposal, with processors and farmers having to bear new costs that cannot be recovered from the marketplace.
- E.) The horticulture sector has already lost processing plants in Ontario, to the detriment of the industry.
- F.) The inability of CAIS to adequately meet the needs of farmers that are living in times that are far from "normal market conditions."
- G.) Quebec's ASRA program is having a negative effect on Ontario producers, because Quebec farmers are able to produce at less than their cost of production and still be assured of profitability.

The announcement last week of \$2 million for the Ontario Alliance of Food Processors to invest in improving the profitability of the processing sector in Ontario is an encouraging first step.

We urge your government to continue to make targeted investments to infrastructure and profitability to the entire food industry in Ontario, alongside the necessary short-term support for all producers that are affected during a time of need.

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario believes that diversified family farms are the best model for developing sustainable, low-support agriculture in the long-term (as outlined in our Vision Document – link below).

[http://www.christianfarmers.org/main\\_publications/Documents/pub\\_visiondoc\\_2002.pdf](http://www.christianfarmers.org/main_publications/Documents/pub_visiondoc_2002.pdf)

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Kikkert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

John Kikkert, President  
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario