



Long-Term Thinking
for Today's Issues

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NEWS RELEASE

Subject: **Direct to consumer marketing of chicken proposed by three farm groups**

Guelph, April 2006. The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario and the National Farmers Union Ontario have sent a joint proposal to the board of the Chicken Farmers of Ontario (CFO) requesting an exemption for farmer direct to consumer marketing of chicken, under certain conditions.

"Our joint proposal is designed to provide order and accountability to the small, unregulated flocks of chicken being produced in the province," said Henry Stevens, a CFFO vice president. "We also believe that a market opportunity exists for these birds without offsetting the established market for poultry products."

John Clement, the CFFO's General Manager, notes that the three groups are pleased to be able to present a unified joint effort on an issue of substance.

"It's important for farm groups to cooperate on issues when they can see a common goal and a means to get there," said Clement.

The following excerpts are taken from the letter to the CFO:

"we would like to emphasize our stalwart support for supply management and the protection it provides family farmers. Orderly marketing legislation prevents farmers from having to deal directly with powerful transnational corporations in a very competitive industry....This proposal is not an attempt to undermine supply management, but an attempt to strengthen it through timely improvements. We believe it is an opportunity for supply management to be seen as inclusive, rather than exclusive."

"We realize the new allocation agreement between the Chicken Farmers of Ontario and the Association of Ontario Chicken Processors, which is scheduled to take effect in A-72, does address some of the 'specialty' production issues in the province. However, we feel that simply eliminating the minimum farm size does not address the concerns of those who have a market for a small volume of chicken that is grown in a different manner — especially if they are required to buy quota."

"Our respective organizations have agreed that a 'farmer direct to consumer marketing exemption' would be based on the following conditions:

- 1. Level of Exemption – The maximum number of birds allowed per year would be 500.*
- 2. Licensing Fee – Producers would pay CFO a reasonable licensing fee. This would be on a cost recovery basis for CFO to administer the program as well as any agreed upon HACCP program.*

3. *Terms of Exemption – Chickens must be sold directly to consumers from the farm gate or a Farmers’ Market. Chickens sold at a farmers’ market must be sold by the same farm that raised the chickens. All chickens mst be legally processed at licensed facilities.*

4. *Enforcement of Exemption – Small lot chick sales would be registered at the time of purchase and recorded to specific farm locations. This information would be recorded in a database, with locations over 500 bird per year limit immediately red flagged and followed up on.*

5. *Small Flock Committee – CFO would form a ‘Small Flock Committee’ to help deal with further issues around the exemption as they arise."*

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