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NEWS RELEASE

Subject: **Seminar series to examine expectations regarding food and farming**

Guelph, February 2004. A new seminar series for CFFO members and friends is being launched this month to examine the expectations society has regarding food, farming, health and the environment.

Entitled "**Out of an Abundance of Caution**," the series will highlight the ever-growing list of requirements farmers must meet to ensure society that food is being produced in a manner that sustains the health of people, livestock and the environment. Those attending will also be challenged to examine the underlying expectations that both farmers and society are creating regarding food and whether some changes may be in order.

"It all started with a voluntary plan, the Environmental Farm Plan, more than a decade ago," said Elbert van Donkersgoed, the series facilitator. "Now assurance schemes are everywhere with few likely to be voluntary."

van Donkersgoed offers a compelling list of plans, protocols, standards, and rules that have arrived for many farmers. They include marketing contracts, HACCP, meat and bone meal free feed, nutrient management plans, quality assurance schemes, refugia for BT corn, technology use agreements and traceability plans. Likely to be added soon are new regulations for deadstock, animal transport standards, antibiotics resistance and source water protection plans.

"It will be important for those attending our seminars to struggle with the notion that ever-increasing regulations will enhance food safety," said van Donkersgoed. "We may discover that the farm community needs to use different messages so that consumers do not develop unrealistic expectations regarding food."

For a full listing of dates, locations and registration information for the seminar series, log on to www.christianfarmers.org.

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