



*Long-Term Thinking
for Today's Issues*

Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

7660 Mill Rd., RR4 Guelph Ontario N1H 6J1

Voice (519) 837-1620 Fax (519) 824-1835

E-mail: cfomail@christianfarmers.org

Web site: www.christianfarmers.org

NEWS RELEASE

Subject: **PROTECTION OF ONTARIO'S FARMLAND NEEDED DUE TO NEW PRESSURES**

GUELPH, Ontario - Members of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) recently reiterated their position that good farmland needs to be protected from urban development, and made a number of recommendations. This position statement is a direct result of the impact on farmland from the Greenbelt legislation.

Henry Stevens, CFFO Vice-President, noted that this statement is very much in keeping with one of the recommendations developed by the Agricultural Odyssey Group in 2002, urging for the redevelopment of brownfields, underused sites and vacant areas within urban boundaries.

"However, the CFFO developed this statement as a direct result of the noticeable impact on farmland since the Places to Grow Act and the Greenbelt legislation have been implemented. But farmland is vulnerable in other areas of the province as well; any time farmers are close to growing urban centres, farmland is under pressure. Expanding onto farmland is seen as the cheapest option for urban growth."

"In the Province of British Columbia regulations have been in effect for many years that protect all class one and two farmland from urban development," stated Nathan Stevens, Research and Policy Associate with the CFFO. "It is time for the Province of Ontario to come up with a similar plan."

"The land is the foundation of agriculture, and in the long term it will be beneficial to all of society to protect our prime farmland" said Ted VandenHurk, CFFO Director. "Farmland is important for the economic well-being of our sector, but it is also vital for food security and environmental preservation."

Provincial Council members adopted a position statement that includes four recommendations that will, when implemented, allow for the best farmland to remain available for the production of food and fibre. These recommendations include the creation of regulations to protect class one and two land, similar to B.C., better defined land use designations in the Provincial Policy Statement, and encouraging the redevelopment of brownfields and greyfields within existing urban centres by addressing liability concerns.

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Attachment: The Impact of the Places to Grow Act and the Greenbelt on Farmland

For more information please contact:

Henry Stevens	Vice-President	519-343-5883
Ted VandenHurk	Director	705-428-5713
Nathan Stevens	Research & Policy Associate	519-837-1620 x 226