



*Long-Term Thinking  
for Today's Issues*

## Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

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## NEWS RELEASE

Subject: **Product of Canada needs to mean Product of Canada**

Guelph – Members of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) Provincial Council, representing the organization's members from across the province, recently adopted a position statement on food labelling issues for Canada. The statement is a response to the proposed new direction for "Product of Canada" and "Made in Canada" labelling drafted by the federal government, and is the result of extensive consultation with CFFO members over the past five months.

Members expressed their endorsement of the proposed changes to the obligations associated with the "Product of Canada" label. These changes will ensure that "all or virtually all" of the ingredients in the product carrying the label will be produced in Canada.

"We are pleased that this will give Canadians the opportunity to support the entire food value chain and assure them that they get the quality product they expect when they see the "Product of Canada" label," said Gerald Poechman, a CFFO Vice-President. "However, in order to ensure consumer confidence in the system it will be important that items such as water are removed from any measure of Canadian content; otherwise we could again end up with "Product of Canada" fruit juices, of which only the water is the Canadian portion."

While the CFFO recognizes the improvements to the "Product of Canada" label, the organization also believes that the proposed "Made in Canada" label fails in its attempt to provide transparency for consumers.

"In order for consumers to be able to make an informed choice, the knowledge surrounding the origin of the product must somehow be available to them, whether it be on the label or accessible by phone or internet," according to John VanDyk, an Executive Board director. "To take it a step further, I would be in favour of also recommending that voluntary Country of Origin Labelling legislation be enabled by the federal government." Provincial Council members unanimously voted in favour of adding that recommendation to the list.

Other recommendations included in the statement, which will be forwarded to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, call for close monitoring for transparency in the use of symbols, such as the maple leaf; ensuring that the use of the word "Canada" in "Canada #1/Grade A" is not misleading to consumers; and a recommendation that the CFIA hold open consultations for the development of other criteria related to food product labels, such as "local" and "natural".

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