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April 23, 2018.

Hon. Jeff Leal, MPP
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
11th Floor, 77 Grenville Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 1B3
Via email: minister.omafra@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Leal,

Support for Organic Certification and Registry in Ontario

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) is an Accredited Farm Organization representing the interests of over 4,000 farm families in Ontario.

Last summer the CFFO wrote you to indicate our support for proposed legislation which would regulate the use of the term “organic” in Ontario. We are writing to reiterate our support to see this legislation passed in Ontario. This will bring Ontario into alignment with the five other provinces who have implemented similar legislation. Creating a registry of certified “organic” products will further support the integrity of the Ontario organic food system.

Canadian consumers want to be able to make food choices based on their values and health needs. Consumer demand for organic products is growing in Canada. According to the Organic Council of Ontario, the Ontario organic market is growing approximately 10% annually and is now worth \$1.4 billion per year. Legislated regulation of the use of the term “organic” will deepen public trust and benefit consumers by ensuring the integrity of organic production and products in the marketplace.

Legislation that creates consistency in the use of the term “organic” also supports producers. It ensures a fair playing field for all farmers (conventional and organic) in Ontario and supports better market access outside the province for Ontario organic producers. This will widen the opportunity for local organic producers to meet local and export demand.

Ontario has a strong and diverse food system and organic farming is an important part of that overall diversity. Market demand demonstrates that Ontario consumers support this system of production. Government legislation to regulate use of the term “organic” will benefit both consumers and producers and will strengthen the Ontario agri-food sector as a whole.

We appreciate your consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,

Clarence Nywening, President
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario