



Presidents' Council

195 St. David Street South, 2nd Flr, Fergus, ON N1M 2L4, (519) 787-4322 ~ www.ontariopresidentscouncil.com, susan.tfio@bell.net

September 16, 2025

Minister Trevor Jones
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
11th Floor
77 Grenville St
Toronto, ON M5S 1B3
minister.omafa@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Jones:

On behalf of the Presidents' Council¹, I am writing to express our interest in engaging with your ministry on matters related to international trade and market access.

At a recent Council meeting, members heard an update from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada staff on current international trade developments affecting Canada's agriculture and food sectors. The discussion highlighted the growing importance of coordinated provincial and federal engagement in trade negotiations and policy development. In light of this, we would welcome the opportunity to better understand how OMAFA is currently working with, or plans to work with, federal departments to ensure Ontario's agricultural interests are well represented in trade discussions.

Additionally, Council members are keen to explore how Ontario's agricultural associations can collaborate more closely with your office and OMAFA staff to provide timely input on trade barriers and concerns related to other countries' access to our domestic markets. We believe that a proactive and transparent approach to these issues will strengthen Ontario's position in global trade and support the long-term competitiveness of our agri-food sector.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and your OMAFA team to discuss these matters further and explore avenues for ongoing collaboration. Our next Presidents' Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 15th from 9:00 a.m. to noon in Guelph. This would be an ideal opportunity for you to meet the 41 members of the Presidents' Council as well as update us on this important issue. If that date is not convenient, we can organize a Council meeting to accommodate your schedule.

We look forward to your response and to working together in support of Ontario's agriculture and food industries.

Yours truly,

Drew Spoelstra
Chair, Presidents' Council

Cc: Deputy Minister John Kelly john.m.kelly@ontario.ca
Assistant Deputy Minister, David Hagarty david.hagarty@ontario.ca

¹ The Presidents' Council was formed in 2004 and is a venue for the Chairs and Presidents of Ontario's agricultural organizations to discuss the broad issues and challenges facing Ontario agriculture (current membership list is attached). The Council meets three times per year in September, December and March.



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2024 – 2025 Membership of Presidents' Council

1. Victoria Berry, AgScape
2. Craig McLaughlin, Beef Farmers of Ontario
3. Alexandra Chesney, Berry Growers of Ontario
4. Murray Opsteen, Chicken Farmers of Ontario
5. Henk Vaarkamp, Christian Farmers' Federation of Ontario
6. Sadaf Mollaei, Gordon S. Lang School of Business and Economics, University of Guelph
7. Mark Hamel, Dairy Farmers of Ontario
8. Brent Preston (Ali English), Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario
9. Scott Helps, Egg Farmers of Ontario
10. Stefan Larrass, F.A.R.M.S
11. Janelle Cardiff, Farm and Food Care Ontario
12. Andrew Morse, Flowers Canada (Ontario)
13. Chris Conway, Food and Beverage Ontario
14. Glen Gilvesy, Ginseng Ontario
15. Jeff Harrison, Grain Farmers of Ontario
16. Matthias Oppenlaender, Grape Growers of Ontario
17. Ryan Koeslag, Mushrooms Canada
18. Kelly Somerville, Livestock Research Innovation Corporation
19. Max Hansgen, National Farmers Union
20. Rachel Gras, Student Federation of the OAC
21. John Cranfield, Ontario Agriculture College, University of Guelph
22. Russel Hurst, Ontario Agri Business Association
23. Chris Hedges, Ontario Apple Growers
24. Jamie Payton Ontario Bean Growers
25. Shayan Sharif, Office of Research, University of Guelph
26. Bill Bearss, Ontario Broiler Hatching Egg and Chick Commission
27. Drew Spoelstra, Ontario Federation of Agriculture
28. Shawn Brenn, Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association
29. Steve Peters, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers
30. Franco Naccarato, Meat & Poultry Ontario
31. Tara Terpstra, Ontario Pork
32. Shawn Brenn, Ontario Potato Board
33. Dave Hope, Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers
34. Art Alblas, Ontario Sheep Farmers
35. Phil Tregunno, Ontario Tender Fruit Growers
36. Lauren Stallard Wedderburn, Organic Council of Ontario
37. Gabe Ferguson, Rural Ontario Institute
38. Jan VanderHout, The Ontario Greenhouse Alliance
39. Matt Steele, Turkey Farmers of Ontario
40. Renée-Claude Goulet, Union des cultivateurs-franco-ontariens
41. Philip Kroesbergen (Jennifer Haley), Veal Farmers of Ontario