



**Ontario Federation of Agriculture**

**Ontario AgriCentre**

100 Stone Road West, Suite 206, Guelph, Ontario N1G 5L3  
Tel: (519) 821-8883 • Fax: (519) 821-8810 • [www.ofa.on.ca](http://www.ofa.on.ca)

March 14, 2012

The Honourable John Gerretsen, MPP  
Ministry of the Attorney General  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
720 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K1

Dear Minister Gerretsen:

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is hearing very frequently from farmers about trespass on farmland, primarily by motorized all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). This results in significant damage to farm property and crops. Our members are also frustrated that most trespass incidents are not pursued in a meaningful way by Ontario's police departments, both municipal and provincial.

Our members attribute the increase in trespass incidents to the lack of effective deterrents (low fines and little enforcement), combined with a lack of awareness of and respect for private property.

To effect positive change, the OFA requests that the Ontario government consider deterrents as follows:

- a) Impose a minimum fine of \$500 for trespassing, (currently there is no specified minimum; maximum fine not to exceed \$2000), and
- b) Allow for damage awards up to \$25,000 (currently set at \$1000; \$25,000 is the current Small Claims Court maximum) which more accurately reflects the actual amount of damage and costs of remedial work required to repair damage.

Combined with these changes, we encourage the province to engage in a public education campaign to enhance public awareness that farmland and other rural property is mostly private and that anyone wishing to access private property must first obtain the permission of the owner. The consequences of trespass should also be conveyed.

On behalf of Ontario's farm families, I thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark Wales'.

Mark Wales  
President

cc: Hon. Madeleine Meilleur; Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services  
OFA Board of Directors  
County Federation Presidents