



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ontario AgriCentre

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April 19, 2012

The Hon. Bob Chiarelli
Minister of Transportation
77 Wellesley St. West
Ferguson Block, 3rd Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1Z8

Dear Minister Chiarelli

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is extremely troubled to learn that the Pelee Island ferry, sufficiently large to carry farm equipment and supplies is currently out of service for scheduled maintenance. Out-of-season service on the Jiimaan wasn't done in a timely manner to ensure it would be ready to serve island customers in what was obviously an early start to the season.

Farmers crop over 6,500 acres of land on Pelee Island. They desperately need to fertilize their winter wheat crops. The wheat is at risk of being lost. Seeds, other crop inputs and farm equipment are also waiting to be delivered to island farms. The Island produces predominately wheat, soybeans and grapes. Delays in planting and/or fertilizing these crops will negatively impact or eliminate yields come harvest.

The current lack of adequate ferry service to and from Pelee Island is unacceptable. Island farmers, other island businesses and residents cannot abide the current situation.

On behalf of the island's farmers, we insist on immediate action to provide adequate ferry service to Pelee Island – service sufficient to handle the large loads needing to be transported. It is imperative your government undertake immediate action to deliver vital agricultural equipment and supplies, by whatever means necessary.

We await your prompt attention to the critical matter.

Sincerely,

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

Mark Wales
President

cc: Hon. Ted McMeekin, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Taras Natyshak, MPP - Essex
OFA Board of Directors
Essex Federation of Agriculture