



**Ontario Federation of Agriculture**

**Ontario AgriCentre**

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January 28, 2014

The Honourable Charles Sousa  
Minister of Finance  
c/o Budget Secretariat  
Frost Building North, 3rd Floor  
95 Grosvenor Street  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1Z1  
Fax: 416-325-0969

Dear Minister Sousa:

On behalf of our 37,000 farm family members and supporters, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is pleased to provide our views on the budgetary priorities of the Ontario government. Our pre-budget brief presented on January 16, 2014 to the Ontario Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs is enclosed for your review and consideration.

Meeting the Premier's agri-food challenge of doubling the agri-food sector's annual growth rate and creating 120,000 jobs by the year 2020 will require key government expenditures and policies highlighted in our pre-budget brief. We are confident the right policies and programming can achieve sustainable growth and increased employment in the farm and food sector in Ontario.

The OFA has identified the need for the province to invest in rural Ontario to ensure rural Ontario residents have access to a similar range and quality of services and infrastructure as their urban counterparts. Expanding access to natural gas in rural Ontario will provide not only provide much needed energy cost savings for rural residents but also help drive rural economic development in the agri-food sector as well as in other sectors. In addition, continued efforts to build a regulatory regime that is effective, but not detrimental to the farm economy, are crucial.

We look forward to working with you as you prepare the next Ontario budget and would be pleased to meet with you to discuss these items and other issues.

Sincerely,

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

Mark Wales  
President

cc: Ontario Federation of Agriculture Board of Directors

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