



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ontario AgriCentre

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December 2, 2016

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0C5

Hon. Jeff Leal
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
77 Greenville Street, 11th Floor
Toronto, ON
M7A 1B3

Dear Ministers,

RE: Agri-Recovery assistance request due to the 2016 Ontario drought

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is the largest voluntary, general farm organization in Canada, representing over 36,000 farm families across Ontario. As a dynamic farmer-led organization based in Guelph, Ontario, OFA works to represent and champion the interests of Ontario farmers through government relations, farm policy recommendations, lobby efforts, community representation, media relations and more. OFA is the leading advocate and voice for Ontario farmers.

As you can appreciate, it has been an extremely challenging summer in some parts of Ontario due to the drought. This has resulted in not only a shortage of feed on some livestock farms, but also the need to haul water for livestock watering.

OFA is thankful that AAFC has recognized that low moisture levels in affected areas resulted in significant forage shortages for Ontario livestock producers and provided livestock tax deferral provision to livestock producers in prescribed drought regions to defer a portion of their 2016 sale proceeds of breeding livestock until the next year to help replenish the herd.

In addition to this livestock tax deferral and the core Business Risk Management (BRM) programs, we believe farmers need additional assistance to help deal with the extraordinary costs of recovery associated with this drought. Therefore, OFA requests that AAFC and OMAFRA undertake an Agri-Recovery joint assessment to examine the impacts of this drought and determine if assistance from core BRM programs will provide enough assistance to enable producers to undertake the actions necessary for recovery.

Ontario farmers are resilient but do rely on the suite of business risk management programs in circumstances well beyond their control, such as those experienced this past summer. OFA is prepared to work closely with you to ensure our farmers are able to access the programs in an efficient and effective way to mitigate the damages and sustain their family businesses.

We thank you in advance for your decisive call for an Agri-Recovery assessment of support options for livestock producers dealing with the 2016 drought.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Currie", is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Keith Currie
President

cc: Greg Meredith, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Branch AAFC,
Phil Malcolmson, Assistant Deputy Director, Policy Division, OMAFRA
Ron Bonnett, President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture
John Thompson, President, Prince Edward County Federation of Agriculture
OFA Board of Directors