

Business Risk Management Review:

At last summer's annual Federal/Provincial Agriculture Minister's talks (FPT) in St. John's Newfoundland, Canada's agriculture ministers reached agreement on a new five-year investment for the agri-food industry with the [announcement of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership \(CAP\)](#). The program officially begins on April 1, 2018 and involves a \$3 billion investment to strengthen the agri-food sector in Canada.

CAP will focus on six key areas to support Canada's agri-food sector – an industry that already contributes more than \$100 billion annually and employs 2.3 million Canadians. Science, research and innovation; markets and trade; environmental sustainability and climate change; value-added agriculture and agri-food processing; public trust; and risk management are the six areas that will be supported over the five years of the program.

A key component of the new partnership – that picks up where the last agricultural policy framework Growing Forward 2 wraps up – is a continuation of Business Risk Management (BRM) programs.

There was consensus among provincial agriculture ministers on the need for a **comprehensive review of the suite of BRM programs**. For several months prior to the FPT meeting OFA, along with industry partners, advocated for a review.

The need for the review was identified by commodity organizations in recognition of the growing sense that the present suite of BRM programming was not adequately serving the needs of farmers across Canada. Falling participation levels reflected the perceived shortcomings of the programs.

An external Expert Panel consisting of producers, academics and experts has been established to provide feedback and guidance on the review. The Panel members will support the BRM review task team made up of FPT officials who have been working on the review since the summer of 2017. This work will help inform ministers on the continued effectiveness and impact of BRM Programs in meeting the future needs of the sector.

The consultation process is ongoing with opportunities to provide input prior to the report to ministers.

Background:

OFA's high-level position is at: <https://ofa.on.ca/issues/business-risk-management/>

More specific requests are contained in our 2016 submission to inform the development of the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP) policy framework: <https://ofa.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/2016-OFA-letter-regarding-Agriculture-Agri-Food-Canada-Next-Policy-Framework-Phase-2-Consultation.pdf>

Following the July FPT meeting Minister MacAuley unilaterally announced changes to the existing BRM program. Our reaction to the CAP BRM program changes were released in this commentary: <https://ofa.on.ca/newsroom/mixed-news-ontario-agriculture-new-federal-investment-program/>

The Ontario Auditor General's 2017 Report also has a chapter of Farm Support Programs: http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en17/v1_305en17.pdf