



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ontario AgriCentre

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September 4, 2018

The Honourable Rod Phillips
Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks
77 Wellesley Street West
11th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2T5

VIA email

Dear Minister Phillips;

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) once again congratulates you on your appointment as Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks. We believe that together we can accomplish much to make our farming and food sector a driving force in a vibrant Ontario economy.

While we continue to support investment in economic development across rural Ontario the day-to-day issues that affect our farm businesses' sustainability also require attention.

Earlier this year, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks posted a draft Excess Soil Management regulatory proposal on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry for public comment. Urban growth and redevelopment, primarily within the area covered by the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, has brought to light the challenges to dealing with large volumes of excess soil.

If properly handled, clean top soil can improve the fertility and productivity of agricultural land. As well, top soils and subsoil can improve the rehabilitation of pits and quarries after all available aggregate has been removed. However, the lack of effective regulations governing excess soil movement, along with the lack of tracking of soil movements from source to end use can negatively impact our land and environment.

OFA supported the adoption of an Excess Soil Management regulation to implement a tracking system from source to end use and ensure that only topsoil is applied to agricultural land, amongst other measures. We recognize that Ministry staff are finalizing the compilation of the responses they've received. As soon as Ministry staff have completed this, OFA encourages you to finalize and bring into force the Excess Soil Management regulation.

Sincerely,

Keith Currie
President

c: OFA Board of Directors