

December 18, 2019

Mr. Faisal Hassan, MPP
York South-Weston
Room 325, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A2

Dear Mr. Hassan,

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the time you spent with us last week at Queen's Park and allowing us to share with you the priorities for Ontario's agriculture and food sector. With strong support and investments in our rural communities, we can unlock continued economic growth opportunities and drive a healthy economy that benefits all Ontarians.

Ontario's diverse and innovative agri-food industry feeds our population, fuels our rural communities and drives the provincial economy, generating more than 837,000 jobs and contributing more than \$47 billion to Ontario's annual GDP. From farmers to our diverse food processing industry, our agri-food sector is a powerhouse of possibilities.

OFA is Canada's largest general farm organization, representing more than 38,000 farm family businesses across Ontario. Ontario's agricultural and agri-food sector is among the most diverse agriculture sectors in North America. With over 200 different agricultural commodities grown and raised right here in Ontario, that's more than any other Canadian province and most U.S. states.

We appreciated the opportunity to speak with you about our priorities for agriculture and rural Ontario in 2020 including a push to ensure an efficient and affordable energy source (natural gas) across Ontario as well as high speed internet for rural and Northern communities. As we discussed, equal access to reliable internet and connectivity in general is important for students, youth and businesses in rural communities. With the right infrastructure and support in rural Ontario, agriculture and agri-food is poised to be a growth sector, offering a sustainable local food supply as well as opportunity for employment in all aspects of the value chain.

OFA looks forward to continuing the conversation with you and working together to strengthen Ontario's agri-food sector and rural communities.

Sincerely,



Keith Currie
President