

January 9, 2020

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff, MPP  
Niagara West  
438 University Avenue  
5th Floor  
Toronto, ON  
M5G 2K8

Dear MPP Oosterhoff,

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 month 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.

Our meeting provided us a welcome opportunity to express our appreciation for this government's support in seeing the proposed repeal of the Line Fences Act dropped from Bill 132, as well as sharing our strong support for the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act.

Since our meeting on December 9th, we are extremely pleased to see announcements regarding government commitment to rural infrastructure needs such as natural gas expansion as well as launch of the first Northern Ontario Residential Broadband Project, part of the Next Generation Network Program, two platforms of OFA's Producing Prosperity campaign.

As discussed with you in our meeting, the long-term sustainability of our agri-food sector depends upon building trust, awareness and understanding with consumers. We believe the foundation of that work begins in the classroom. In addition, our sector is in need of both skilled and unskilled labour to sustain and grow a local, sustainable and secure food supply. As such, we need to work to encourage youth to investigate the variety of career opportunities in the agri-food sector.



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We are enclosing information kits about AgScape a partner organization dedicated to building programs and resources for the classroom, ensuring agriculture and food topics are integrated into the Ontario classroom, both in terms of food literacy and career opportunities.

Again, thank you for your time meeting with us. OFA looks forward to continuing the conversation with you and working together to strengthen Ontario's agri-food sector and rural communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Keith Currie', is positioned above the printed name.

Keith Currie  
President

cc: AgScape 8560 Tremaine Rd, Milton, ON L9T 4Z1