

September 16, 2020

Mr. John Nater  
Shadow Minister, Rural Economic Development  
Conservative Party of Canada  
Member of Parliament, Perth – Wellington

Dear Mr. Nater,

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), we would like to congratulate you on being appointed the Shadow Minister of Rural Economic Development. We know your extensive knowledge and understanding of the agriculture and food industry as well as our rural communities will be a tremendous asset in your new role within the Conservative Party of Canada. We look forward to working together with you and your colleagues to build on our relationship and continue growing the agriculture community. We hope to unlock continued economic growth opportunities for Ontario's agri-food sector and drive a healthy economy that benefits all Ontarians and contributes to all Canadians.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a new reality for all Ontarians and Canadians as the changes and challenges to our environment continue to mount each day. Ontarians rely on the agri-food system to ensure they have steady and reliable access to safe, healthy and affordable food products. Farmers are well-known for their resilience and perseverance. But, even before the COVID-19 crisis, farmers were coping with a difficult year that included multiple rail disruptions, a shortage of meat processing capacity and volatile global trade and market access.

Ontario's diverse and innovative agri-food industry feeds our population, continues to provide positive environmental and climate change benefits, fuels our rural communities and serves as an economic engine for the provincial economy, generating more than 860,000 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. We encourage you and all party members to ensure that strategic infrastructure investments and food security is prioritized at the federal level. Ensuring a viable agri-food sector is critical, not only throughout this crisis, but to the long-term success and recovery of the province and our country.

It is important to explore long-term solutions for supporting growing industries such as agri-food and capitalizing on new economic development opportunities. Growing Ontario's agri-food sector will create jobs, improve food security, and stimulate our economy. The agri-food sector can be the solution to rebuilding our economy, to be the driving force for economic prosperity in the province.

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We look forward to building our relationship and working collaboratively to ensure the issues and priorities impacting the growth of the agri-food sector and rural communities remains a priority in Ontario and across Canada. Please feel free to reach out anytime for additional information on issues, priorities or opportunities.

Sincerely,



Keith Currie  
President



Mark Reusser  
Vice President  
Zone 9 Director, Dufferin-Waterloo-Wellington



Brent Royce  
Zone 7 Director, Huron-Perth