

September 17, 2020

Ms. Lianne Rood
Shadow Minister, Agriculture and Agri-Food for the Official Opposition
Conservative Party of Canada
Member of Parliament, Lambton – Kent – Middlesex

Dear Ms. Rood,

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), we would like to congratulate you on being appointed the Shadow Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food for the Official Opposition. Your leadership skills and experience will be significantly valued in your new role within the Conservative Party of Canada. We know your extensive knowledge and understanding of the agriculture and food industry will be a tremendous asset to the Canadian agri-food sector. We look forward to working collaboratively with you and your colleagues to grow the agriculture industry and unlock continued economic growth opportunities for Ontario's agri-food sector.


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. The agri-food sector can be the solution to rebuilding our economy, to be the driving force for economic prosperity in the province.

OFA looks forward to working together to support the agri-food sector and to have an ambassador to drive change and strengthen our rural communities in Ontario and across Canada. Please feel free to reach out anytime for additional information on issues, priorities or opportunities in Ontario's agri-food sector.

Sincerely,


Keith Currie
President


Louis Roesch
Zone 1 Director, Essex-Kent


Crispin Colvin
Zone 6 Director, Lambton-Middlesex