

**Ministry of Agriculture,  
Food and Rural Affairs**

Office of the Minister

77 Grenville Street, 11th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1B3  
Tel: 416-326-3074  
www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA

**Ministère de l'Agriculture, de  
l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales**

Bureau du ministre

77, rue Grenville, 11<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1B3  
Tél. : 416 326-3074  
www.ontario.ca/MAAARO



Ontario

November 9, 2020

Cathy Lennon  
General Manager  
Ontario Federation of Agriculture  
cathy.lennon@ofa.on.ca

Dear Ms. Lennon:

I know this is a challenging year for all of us. I want to commend everyone who has taken efforts to ensure they and their workers are safe on their farms and share information for you and your members on programs that may help you in those efforts. It takes all of us working together to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Last month, we announced a new agreement between Ontario and the federal government which will see Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada invest an additional \$11.6 million to help support efforts by Ontario producers to reduce the spread of COVID-19 on farms.

This investment will expand the province's Enhanced Agri-Food Workplace Protection program which provides support for farmers and other operations to assist with preventative occupational health and safety measures. With help from this investment from the federal government, we have doubled the amount farmers can claim for preventative expenses, to \$15,000.

The updated program guidelines and submission form for this project category are now available through the ministry's website:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/agrifoodprogram\\_guide1-2.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/agrifoodprogram_guide1-2.htm)

We have also introduced the On-Farm Worker Safety Improvement Program which will provide support of up to \$100,000 for small capital projects including housing modifications, workplace modifications and equipment to allow greater physical distancing for workers.

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The program guidelines and submission form for this project category are now available through the ministry's website:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/agrifoodprogram\\_guide3.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/agrifoodprogram_guide3.htm)

Eligible submissions for project costs incurred on or after March 15, 2020 are received and assessed on a continuous basis, while funding is available for both programming streams. For more information about how to apply for this funding, please contact my ministry's Agricultural Information Contact Centre at: 1-877-424-1300 or visit:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/agrifoodprogram.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/agrifoodprogram.htm).

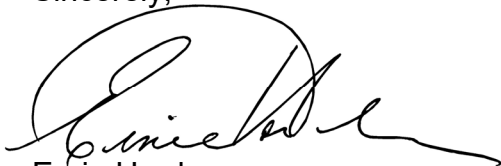
The government has also developed a [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) directory](#) of companies that sell PPE and other supplies to keep your employees and customers safe from COVID-19.

If farms do not currently have a prevention and control plan in place, I strongly encourage them to create and implement one. Information on how to create a COVID safety plan is available at: [www.ontario.ca/page/develop-your-covid-19-workplace-safety-plan#section-1](http://www.ontario.ca/page/develop-your-covid-19-workplace-safety-plan#section-1)

Also, a reminder that screening employees for COVID when they arrive at the site is now a requirement for all workplaces in Ontario.

I want to thank you for working with us through this challenging time. I know how difficult this situation is for everyone, however working together and sharing information we can reduce the spread of COVID and increase the safety for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ernie Hardeman', with a large, stylized initial 'E'.

Ernie Hardeman

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

### **COVID-19 Reminders**

- Practise physical distancing – stay 2 metres away from others in public
- Wash your hands – with soap and water thoroughly and often
- Get the facts - [www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread](http://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread)