

Thank you for your support of Bill C-280, the *Financial Protection for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Act*. The following is a template to help you in writing to your Member of Parliament to urge them to support this important legislation.

To guide you through this process, we have indicated certain key messages that we encourage you to include (mostly **in bold**). There are also several places for you to personalize your letter, with some suggestions to get you started (*in italics*). Using your company letterhead will also help your letter stand out. Remember: what is most important is to share with your MP why Bill C-280 is important to YOU, your business, and your community.

If you have questions or need further help in writing your letter, don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

[MP NAME]
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR [RIDING NAME]
HOUSE OF COMMONS
OTTAWA, ON K1A 0A6

[DATE]

Dear MP XXX,

As a [BUSINESS TYPE, ex. grower/packer/small business] in your riding, I am writing to ask for your support regarding an important issue to the fruit and vegetable sector in your community, and across the country. **I am urging you to vote in favour of Bill C-280, the *Financial Protection for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Act*.**

- *INSERT DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS (ex. company boilerplate)*
- *DESCRIBE THE ISSUE – WHAT'S MISSING? You can use/personalize one of the examples below or create your own.*

Ex. 1: "Growing/harvesting/packing/marketing fruits and vegetables comes with many risks. I have to incur significant upfront costs, but don't get paid until much later. In my business, this means waiting XXXX to receive payment for perishable products that may have already been consumed by the time I am paid for them."

Ex. 2: "The supply chain for fresh fruits and vegetables is complex and we are required to put significant amounts of money and upfront operations on the line to reliably provide communities with safe and nutritious food. At the same time, our overhead and capital costs continue to rise and returns on those investments are delayed until payment is collected, often long after the product has been sold and consumed."

Ex. 3: "In my business, I am constantly vulnerable to critical financial risk due to a lack of protection from losses incurred as a result of buyer bankruptcy. The impacts of the COVID-19

pandemic, a changing climate and ongoing supply chain disruptions further threaten our food security and the long-term economic viability of the fresh produce sector.”

- *IF POSSIBLE, INCLUDE A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF HOW THESE RISKS/CHALLENGES IMPACT YOUR BUSINESS*

Unfortunately, the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* does not provide workable protection for fresh produce growers and sellers in Canada due to the high perishability of our products and the industry’s longer payment terms.

- *IF YOU SELL TO BUYERS IN THE UNITED STATES, CONSIDER INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS ABOUT THE U.S. PACA.*

In contrast to Canada, fresh produce growers and sellers in the United States are protected against losses when a buyer declares bankruptcy, through a mechanism known as the *Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act* (PACA). Canadian growers and sellers used to have preferential access to this protection when selling to the U.S., but because Canada doesn’t have similar protection in place, the United States Department of Agriculture revoked this access.

INSERT EXAMPLE OF HOW THE LACK OF RECIPROCAL ACCESS TO PACA HAS IMPACTED YOU. You can use/personalize one of the examples below or create your own.

Ex. 1: “Now, if a U.S. buyer goes bankrupt and can’t pay suppliers like us, a Canadian business is required to take out a bond equal to twice the value of the produce in order to file a formal complaint under PACA. That kind of cost is simply out of reach for us.”

Ex. 2: “For the majority Canadian produce businesses, finding the money now required to file a claim under PACA can be very difficult—if not impossible. This not only means we may be forced to abandon claims for our produce’s value, but also puts Canadians at a distinct competitive disadvantage when selling to our largest trading partner.

Ex. 3: “Recently I lost \$XXXX on a load of XXXX sold to the U.S. To fight to receive payment for my produce, I would have had to post a bond worth twice its value. Because I did not have the sufficient funds to post a double bond, I had to accept the loss.”

MP Scot Davidson’s Private Member’s Bill C-280 would establish a critical financial protection mechanism for fresh produce growers and sellers in Canada to help secure payment in the case of a buyer bankruptcy, in the form of a deemed trust that would operate similarly to the successful PACA model in the United States. Creating a deemed trust would not impose any additional cost to government, but would help to ensure that fresh produce growers and sellers can continue to support local economies across the country and provide Canadians with fresh fruits and vegetables – without risking their livelihood.

- *INSERT CONCLUDING STATEMENT ABOUT WHY BILL C-280 IS SO IMPORTANT TO YOU. You can use/personalize one of the examples below or create your own.*

Ex. 1: “Particularly with everything that has happened over the last few years, Canadians want and deserve peace of mind that our food supply is secure. But to truly offer that security, those

growing and selling fresh fruits and vegetables also need peace of mind that they will be paid for their highly perishable products.”

Ex. 2: “I can no longer afford the risks associated with not having financial protection, and neither can Canada’s fruit and vegetable industry.”

Ex. 3: “Between the pandemic and the massive supply chain disruptions we’ve experienced over the past few years, the long-term viability of many fresh produce businesses in Canada is at serious risk. The government needs to do all it can to protect our essential sector.”

As a [GROWER/OTHER BUSINESS TYPE] in your community, I am writing to ask for your support of Bill C-280 to establish a deemed trust for fresh produce growers and sellers in Canada.

For more information on this important issue and Bill C-280, please visit protectproducesales.ca.

Respectfully/Sincerely, etc.,

[SIGNATURE]

Cc:

Scot Davidson, Member of Parliament for York—Simcoe (scot.davidson@parl.gc.ca)

The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
(marie-claude.bibeau@parl.gc.ca)

Rebecca Lee, Executive Director, Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (rlee@fvgc.ca)
Ron Lemaire, President, Canadian Produce Marketing Association (rlemaire@fvgc.ca)

Other suggested Cc’s:

Kody Blois, Member of Parliament, Chair, Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food
(kody.blois@parl.gc.ca)

Francis Drouin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
(francis.drouin@parl.gc.ca)

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
(minfinance-financemin@fin.gc.ca)

The Honourable Francois-Phillipe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science, and Industry
(ministerofisi-ministredeisi@ised-isde.gc.ca)

The Honourable Gudie Hutchings, Minister of Rural Economic Development
(ministerofred-ministreduder@ised-isde.gc.ca)

Peter Fonseca, Member of Parliament, Chair, Standing Committee on Finance
(peter.fonseca@parl.gc.ca)