

September 28, 2022

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, ON
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Email: aafc.AGLS-SMAG.aac@agr.gc.ca

RE: National Agricultural Labour Strategy Consultation

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is the largest general farm organization in Ontario, proudly representing more than 38,000 farm family members across the province. OFA has a strong voice for our members and the agri-food industry on issues, legislation and regulations governed by all levels of government. We are passionate and dedicated to ensuring the agri-food sector and our rural communities are included, consulted, and considered in any new and changing legislation that impacts the sustainability and growth of our farm businesses.

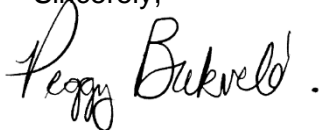
OFA is pleased Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is moving forward to develop a National Agricultural Labour Strategy to address the persistent and chronic labour shortages in farming and food processing. We strongly support efforts to take a strategic approach to managing the critical labour shortage within Canada's agricultural sector. Addressing our labour issues is a key component to unlocking the potential growth of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sectors, while ensuring the long-term strength and resilience of our Canadian food supply chain.

In April 2022, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) together with partners the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA), Food and Beverage Canada (FBC), and the Future Skills Centre (FSC) launched a *National Workforce Strategy for Agriculture and Food and Beverage Manufacturing*. This industry-led initiative is creating an actionable roadmap to lead the way in addressing workforce and skills shortages in agriculture and the food and beverage manufacturing sectors. This Strategic Plan has been framed around five key pillars: perceptions and industry awareness; people and workplace culture; immigration and foreign workers; skills development; and automation and technology. It is currently in the process of engaging industry expertise through five working groups to finalize short, medium, and long-term goals and objectives to address both urgent labour shortages and systemic workforce challenges.

OFA supports the *National Workforce Strategy for Agriculture and Food and Beverage Manufacturing* developed by CAHRC. We look forward to reviewing and accepting the forthcoming interim report from CAHRC. We believe the report, with the endorsement of the sector, will provide comprehensive advice that will inform AAFC's National Agricultural Labour Strategy.

OFA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the National Agricultural Labour Strategy and we look forward to working with AAFC as this Strategy develops.

Sincerely,



Peggy Brekveld
President

cc: Mary Robinson, President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture
Paul Glenn, Chair, Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council
Rosemary MacLellan, Chair, Food and Beverage Canada
OFA Board of Directors