

September 26, 2023

Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
College Park
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Calandra,

Re: May 21, 2022, Derecho Storm, and the Disaster Recovery Assistance Program

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA)'s more than 38,000 farm family members, I am writing to you regarding our outstanding request for assistance for farmers who suffered damage caused by the derecho storm on May 21, 2022, and the need to ensure the Disaster Recovery Assistance Program adequately responds to future disasters when they occur. Please find enclosed our letter dated October 5, 2022, outlining our request.

As you know the Disaster Recovery Assistance Program was made available to residents in the Township of Uxbridge (Durham Region) who were impacted by the May 21, 2022, derecho storm. However, at that time, similar assistance was not made available to others who suffered damage in other areas of eastern Ontario that was caused by the same storm.

We would also like to note that, OFA member delegates attending the OFA's Annual General Meeting held on November 21, 2022, passed the following resolution (# 22-11-22):

“THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with the proper levels of Gov't MMAH, OMAFRA, the Premiers office and any other necessary agency that could help get financial assistance for everyone affected by this storm for losses not covered by insurance, and

FURTHER IT BE RESOLVED THAT OFA work with the same Government Departments to develop a clear and concise set of rules for disaster assistance for future events to alleviate the stress and unpredictability and what appears to be discriminatory rules or political interference when one area qualifies for assistance and others don't which were affected by the same event!”

OFA surveyed our members, between August 14, 2022, and September 1, 2023, to assess the damage from this derecho storm. Of the 54 survey respondents providing dollar estimates of their financial losses, they estimated over \$12 million in property damage, \$880,000 in production (crop and livestock) losses, and over \$3.3 million in farm production losses. Although some survey respondents are still awaiting the processing of their claims, they anticipated private insurance to cover only \$2.8 million in damage and Production Insurance only expected to provide \$290,000

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in assistance. Given these financial figures are based on only a small number of impacted farmers, the full extent of this derecho storm's damage is of course much larger.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and your staff to discuss how the province can support our members with these extraordinary losses and how the Disaster Recovery Assistance Program might be amended to ensure it provides support for everyone who is impacted by the same natural disaster and that the program guidelines are clear and concise to allow for support to be provided swiftly.

Sincerely,



Peggy Brekveld
President

cc: Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
OFA Board of Directors
Janine Lunn, Eastern and Northern Regional Manager, OFA Member Services

Encl (1)