

February 20, 2024

The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Lisa Thompson
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
77 Grenville Street, 11th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1B3

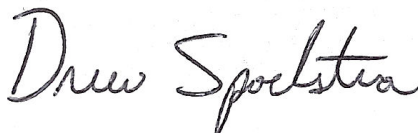
Dear Ministers:

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, I am writing to express my sincere appreciation for your commitment to funding the Farmer Wellness Initiative (FWI) and for supporting the expansion of the FWI to include farm employees and their families. The recent funding boost for this important initiative is a significant investment and step forward in supporting the mental health and well-being of all those working in the agriculture sector.

Advocating for farmer mental health and wellness has been and will continue to be one of the OFA board's areas of strategic focus. Farming can be a demanding and isolating profession, with unique stressors and challenges that can impact the mental health of farmers and farm employees alike. By extending support services through the Farmer Wellness Initiative, you are acknowledging the importance of prioritizing mental health and providing valuable resources to those who need it most.

Once again, thank you for championing the investment in supporting the mental health of farmers and farm employees in Ontario through FWI and the suite of Agriculture Wellness Ontario programs. Your leadership and commitment to this initiative through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Program is greatly appreciated by our membership.

Sincerely,



Drew Spoelstra
President

cc: OFA Board of Directors
President, Secretary OFA's County & Regional Federations of Agriculture
Janine Lunn, Eastern & Northern Region Manager, Member Service Representatives
Paul Nairn, Western Region Manager, Member Service Representatives
Camille Quenneville, Chief Executive Officer, CMHA-Ontario