



# NEWS RELEASE

## Budget 2011 Fails to Address Today's Needs of Ontario Farmers, Farmers Vow to Continue Quest for Long-term Insurance Based Risk-Management

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**March 22, 2011 – Guelph, ON** – Because of the crucial role that Ontario's farmers play in local, regional and national economies, producers from the province's cattle, pork, grains and oilseeds sectors will continue their quest for federal government support of a risk management program. Budget 2011 fails to deliver support for vital insurance-based risk management programs for Ontario farmers that would help them survive unstable and unpredictable market conditions.

Budget 2011 notes that "the Government will assess program options to ensure they provide effective support to the sector while remaining affordable," however, it did not adopt recommendations put forward by Ontario producers.

"While the dialogue with the Government of Canada has been active and ongoing, Ontario's producers are disappointed to see that there is no commitment for an insurance-based risk management program in Budget 2011," says Ontario Cattlemen's Association President Curtis Royal.

In the months leading up to Budget 2011, Ontario beef, pork, grains and oilseeds producers, who have banded together to advocate for a risk management program, met with federal and provincial politicians and encouraged them to partner with producers to implement a long-term solution. Specifically, farmers sought government support for an insurance-based Risk Management Program (RMP). Despite the exclusion of RMP in the Budget 2011, beef, pork and grain producers vow to continue undeterred.

"The status quo is a luxury we cannot afford. The need for a solution is urgent. We can't give up," says Leo Guilbeault from the Ontario Grains and Oilseeds. "The Harper Government has shown that it understands there is a problem with the existing agricultural programming, and they've kept an open door policy to meeting with Ontario farmers. We know they have concerns with our proposed RMP, but we still believe we can work together to find a long-term solution that responds to regional agricultural needs."

With a potential federal election on the horizon and a fall provincial election a certainty, Ontario farmers are pledging to redouble their efforts. "We think there is a good opportunity to negotiate solutions that jointly address the needs of Ontario's farmers and the concerns of government that are also fiscally responsible and reasonable," says Ontario Pork Chair Wilma Jeffray. "Our approach with the federal government complements the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition's provincial efforts."

Under an insurance-based Risk Management Program producers would pay premiums equivalent to one-third of the program cost, with the remaining portion split amongst federal and provincial partners on a 60-40 basis. The program would be generally available, thereby negating the risk of countervail. Producers tout the RMP solution for providing the predictability and positive cash flow required to invest in new equipment, improve overall competitiveness, and access newly opened international markets for agricultural products.

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For more information, please contact:

LeaAnne Hodgins  
Communications Manager  
Ontario Cattlemen's Association  
Tel: 519-824-0334  
Cell: 519-767-8634  
Email: leanne@cattle.guelph.on.ca

Keith Robbins  
Director, Communications & Consumer  
Marketing  
Ontario Pork  
Tel: 519-767-4600  
Email: communications@ontariopork.on.ca

Erin Fletcher  
Manager, Public Affairs and  
Communications  
Ontario Grains and Oilseeds  
Tel: 519-767-4137  
Email: efletcher@gfo.ca