



For Immediate Release

ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES ADD THEIR SUPPORT TO PORK AND BEEF FARMERS' CAMPAIGN FOR INSURANCE RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

GUELPH, ON (March 2, 2011) – Ontario's pork and beef industry welcomed the support of several Ontario municipalities for its proposed new insurance risk management program. Securing the backing of municipal leaders for the program, motions of support have moved forward in nine municipalities across the province.

The Ontario counties of Lambton, Grey, Perth– along with Goderich and Stratford - each approved resolutions in support of the insurance program to protect the beef and pork farmers of Ontario. Committees of Council in Huron and Bruce are recommending approval of resolutions of support to full Council. The approved resolutions reinforce the recognition by municipalities that a strong and thriving livestock and agriculture economy is important for their future growth.

“The establishment of this program is our most important priority for our members and the benefits will ripple throughout communities across the province,” says Wilma Jeffray, Chair of Ontario Pork and a farmer of hogs, cattle, grains and oilseeds in Bruce County. “We look forward to more municipalities showing their support for this much needed program.”

“We are pleased to support this initiative because we clearly recognize how this program supports local economic development in our community,” says Steve Arnold, Warden of Lambton County.

The pork and cattle industries have proposed a partnership with the federal and provincial governments to implement an insurance program similar to the successful program recently implemented for the Grains and Oilseeds industry. Over 80,000 Ontarians make their living on farms and more than 700,000 Ontarians work in the agri-food industry.

The proposed insurance program would see local Ontario farmers in the pork and beef industries pay premiums representing 30% of the long-term cost of the insurance

program on a voluntary basis. Not only would the program offset the difference between the current market price and the average long-term cost of production, it would also eliminate the need for ad hoc government support for both the beef and pork industries in the future.

The pork and beef industry also received added support last week from the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA). In a letter addressed to Ontario's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and to the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada, the Association reinforced the urgency of this initiative.

"The establishment of this new insurance program would give farmers the predictability, bankability and level playing field they need to successfully compete with farmers across Canada and around the world and grow their businesses," wrote Chris White, ROMA Chair.

"It's clear our campaign is gaining momentum," says Curtis Royal, President, Ontario Cattlemen's Association and owner of Royal Farms in Simcoe County. "We are pleased with the strong support our proposal has received from MPPs of all political stripes and now municipal leaders in our communities. This program will have a significant impact on the future of livestock farming in Ontario and it is essential that we get the program in place as soon as possible."

Ontario's pork and beef industries have experienced a severe downturn with declining herds and multiple economic threats from several factors including, BSE, H1N1, and a high Canadian dollar, bringing increased competition from imports.

By partnering with Ontario's local farmers, the provincial and federal governments will help sustain local food production and strengthen the rural economy.

For more information, visit: www.beefporkrmp.ca

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