



Joint Statement on the Upcoming Next Policy Framework (NPF) for Agriculture

July 14, 2022 – OTTAWA - On July 20th Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Agriculture Ministers will be meeting to make important decisions regarding the direction of the Next Policy Framework (NPF), the primary funding envelope for Canadian agricultural policies and programs for the next five years.

The NPF comes at a critical juncture for Canadian farmers and ranchers all across the country. Canadian producers recognize the sector's incredible potential to help address many of the most pressing issues in today's society such as mounting food security concerns and the fight against climate change. But this potential can only be realized with policies that support farmers taking proactive actions, as global leaders, rather than reacting to market demands as they emerge.

The NPF creates the foundation for the next five years of Canadian agriculture, and they may be the most important five years in recent history. Inflationary pressures have made food production costlier and riskier than ever before. Adding onto this, extreme weather events and emerging animal diseases are becoming more and more common, creating situations that are impossible to control and very difficult to predict. Geopolitical events have generated additional uncertainty around the availability of crucial inputs, which could have long-lasting impacts beyond 2022. All of this plays out against ambitious and rapidly approaching emissions reduction targets, while the associated science, strategies, and on-farm practices required to reach those targets continue to evolve.

Terrestrial and aquatic producers continue to respond to growing demand for food produced with a smaller environmental footprint, recognizing the important role agriculture can play in the fight against climate change and as a net-carbon sink. This potential as a climate-solutions-provider will only be achieved through programming that is designed in partnership with farmers to address the barriers to adopting on-farm environmental best management practices.

At the same time, this new programming must not come at the cost of existing priorities. Continued research, market development and Business Risk Management (BRM) programs are absolutely vital in our new environment. Programs mitigating risks from skyrocketing costs and extreme weather events enable producers to further invest in the environmental performance of their operations.

Over the past 20 years, the funding envelope for Canadian agriculture has remained stagnant. FPT Ministers cannot once again ask farmers to do more with less. Farmers have been doing that for decades. The Next Agriculture Policy Framework must take a step forward and invest in these shared ambitions.

Farm leaders from across Canada will be meeting with FPT Ministers this July to discuss how we can all work together to spur green productivity growth in our sector, but this is just one step towards a reinvigorated partnership.

Canadian farmers require a commitment following these meetings to support competitiveness, enhance risk management, and support the sector's environmental ambitions. Food production is an essential service, crucial for the daily functioning of any society. Canada should be proud to support its farmers and look to be leaders in sustainable food production for the world.

Farmers hope to see FPT governments partner with them to achieve this ambition, by investing in the full range of tools needed to meet the challenges of today, the needs of the next generation, and solidify Canadian agriculture's role as a global leader in sustainable production.