

Brendan Byrne
Chair, Grain Farmers of Ontario

April 27, 2022

RE: Interview Request from Grain Farmers of Ontario

Dear Brendan,

Thank you so much for sending us your questions and for giving Ontario Greens the opportunity to speak on these issues that affect the grain farmers of Ontario. I am happy to provide you with a response on behalf of the party.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Crist
Info Centre and Office Manager
Green Party of Ontario

1. Will your party commit to an increase to the Risk Management Program's funding by \$100 million?

Ontario Greens would increase the Risk Management Program to meet or exceed the previous 85% coverage to improve financial security for farmers by providing \$100M in funding. We will provide additional supports for farmers including protecting farmers against losses for up to ten years when they transition from chemical agriculture to soil-health agriculture, eliminating property tax penalties for farmers with small-scale, value-added production facilities on farm and by paying farmers for programs that produce, enhance and maintain ecosystem services leading to cleaner water and air, habitat, carbon sequestration and climate resiliency on agricultural lands. This means rewards for rebuilding soil health with cover crops and with rotational grazing of livestock through crop and livestock insurance discounts and other incentives.

2. Will your party commit to continuing funding for the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Fund?

Ontario Greens support funding research and development to ensure Ontarians have access to healthy, safe food, and that our farmers and businesses have the information they need to be successful and sustainable. As such, we will commit to continuing the funding for the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance Fund.

Ontario Greens will also provide education and grant opportunities to encourage students to enter into the agri-food business and for training in specialty programs that focus on sustainable practices and soil-health within agricultural schools.

3. Will your party commit \$16 million to a world-class research facility at Ridgetown Campus to tackle pressing grain issues like food security and climate change?

Ontario Greens believe in making smart investments now to lessen the blow of climate change and prevent food insecurity. We must become a world leader in research and development to ensure the future we deserve. We would support Ridgetown Campus funding to tackle issues related to food security and climate change.

4. Will your party recognize the value of the grain and oilseed sector by prioritizing research funding from the Agriculture Research Institute of Ontario to this key sector?

Ontario Greens understand the importance of supporting family farms and farming to ensure their success and to improve local food security. Ontario Greens would invest in research and innovation that identifies opportunities and best practices using sustainable approaches to how we grow and produce our food.

5. Will your party recognize the lack of alternatives to grain drying in Ontario for farmers by providing both relief from the carbon price and return of the indirect costs collected to grain farmers until alternatives are made available?

Ontario Greens would work with farming experts to identify and support retrofit projects that provide low or no-carbon alternatives for grain drying. We support the grain producers of Canada in their appeal to the federal government to waive the carbon tax on fuel used for grain drying until a more sustainable alternative for the process is available.

6. Will your party recognize the value of corn ethanol and soy biodiesel to Ontario's low carbon economy and the rural economy by increasing the renewable content requirements in the Cleaner Transportation Fuels Regulation?

Ontario Greens would support the research, development and technical knowledge for the sustainable production of crops used for renewable energies, cleaner fuels and agricultural fibres in cases where they pose no negative impact on food security.

7. Will your party commit to strengthening Ontario's economy by investing grain and oilseed value-added processing?

Ontario Greens would invest in value-added processing as a way to support farmers and help their farms remain viable. We would establish a food processing infrastructure fund to support investments by Ontario-based companies in food processing facilities. We would also eliminate property tax penalties for farmers with small-scale, value-added production facilities on farms.