

An Open Letter from Eastern Canadian Grain Growers

To: The Government of Canada

Over the last year, Eastern Canadian farmers have done everything they can to produce an abundant grain crop that will help Canada and the world meet their food needs. The atrocity of the Russian invasion of Ukraine had an unparalleled impact on the world's grain supply and neighboring countries and people across the world worried about where they would get their grain, placing a higher expectation and demand on Canada's farmers.

Growing our grains was made difficult for several reasons:

1. The rising costs of tools needed for food production were, and are, astronomical, even allowing for strong grain prices
2. Geopolitical and weather events in Canada and around the world were, and are, putting pressure on input costs
3. Russia and Belarus have traditionally been a source of fertilizer for plant nutrition for Eastern Canada farmers and as sanctions were put in place, farmers and fertilizer companies needed to source from other areas of the world
4. Sourcing from places other than Russia and Belarus has resulted in access and availability problems
5. Canadian tariffs on fertilizers cost farmers more than \$34 million dollars in additional costs – at a time when the need for grain is so great and farmers must use fertilizer to produce enough food
6. Canadian tariffs have remained with farmers bearing the cost even though the UN and countries around the world from the European Union, the United States, and more have removed any tariffs as the need for food is much more important

In December 2022, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland and Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau ensured farmers they were working on way to return the \$34 million in tariff money that was paid by farmers. Farmers requested that the monies be returned directly to farmers, who have borne this utterly unreasonable cost.

In the last month, there has been no word from either Minister's office on the plan to return these funds to farmers.

In February, Canada will celebrate Canada Ag Day – a day to recognize all the effort and skill required to produce the food that Canada and the world needs. Eastern Canadian farmers are leaders in sustainable farming from cover cropping, to crop rotation, to water health best management practices, to environmentally sound tilling practices, and unmatched biodiversity and robust ecosystem planning. Eastern Canadian farmers are the foundation for more than 100,000 Canadian jobs and are responsible for more than \$20 billion in economic output. There is a lot to celebrate.

But our farmers need your help. They are facing a 2023 planting and growing season filled with risks that they could not have foreseen – chief among them is access to fertilizer and increased costs that go far beyond any increased income.

We are ready to help our government with the following:

1. Immediate action to return the fertilizer tariff monies directly to the farmers who bore the cost; and
2. A plan to remove any impediments on farm input supply chains (for example the removal of current tariffs); and
3. A longer-term plan to help the agriculture industry source plant nutrition and other inputs from non-sanctioned sources; and
4. Longer-term investment in alternative plant nutrition technologies and domestic production innovation.

As a group, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Quebec Grain Growers and Atlantic Grain Council will always fight for actions that safeguard Canada's ability to produce food.

Yours,

Roy Culberson
Chairman
Atlantic Grains Council

Brendan Byrne
Chair
Grain Farmers of Ontario

Christian Overbeek
president
Producteurs de grains du
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