



**March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**



Hello everyone,

I am sending you this update in an effort to keep you informed as to what the CFA is doing to help best navigate the impact on farmers of this quickly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Please visit [CFA's COVID-19 Resource Page](#) which is continually updated with information relevant to farmers.

I am pleased to begin with some good news. After an intensive effort from CFA and the wider Agri-Food value chain, the federal government recently made the announcement that they will be finding a way to ensure that the entire sector has access to temporary foreign workers. While details are still to come, we hope that this will alleviate some stress for Canadian farmers as we heard from hundreds of farmers across the country about the devastating impacts not having access to these workers would have on their businesses and ability to produce food for Canada and the world.

One of the several activities we are undertaking is we are participating in thrice-weekly Roundtable calls with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, where we bring your concerns to the highest levels of the Federal Government. We are distributing a survey to our membership, and a separate survey to farm families across Canada, every week to identify emerging issues and priorities so that CFA can be proactive and come to the government with solutions not just problems. We thank you for taking part in these surveys and urge you to continue. The questions within will change every week as new issues and priorities emerge.

As all of you know, the Agri-Food sector is a massive chain with many moving parts. Every part of that chain, from raw production, to transportation and processing and all the way to retail, is integral to ensuring that Canadians have access to food during these difficult times. That is why one of our main goals is to have the entire Agri-Food system be deemed an essential service and their workers as essential workers, with the protections and supports which that designation provides.

Last week we were told that this week's Roundtable calls will be focused on Business Risk Management programs and the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the Canadian Agri-Food sector. Last week's calls, focused on farm labour, had an excellent outcome. We hope to see the same positive type of outcomes this week.

CFA is currently diverting all resources to ensure that Canadian farmers get through this pandemic with as little negative impact as possible. Our staff have been extraordinary, working day and night to ensure we be as effective as possible. Every week I will be releasing a statement to keep everyone up-to-date with new information that becomes available.

Thank you,  
Mary Robinson, CFA President