

PRESS RELEASE

Canadian Horticultural Council and Canadian Produce Marketing Association Recognize NDP Commitment to Payment Protection for Produce Sellers

June 18, 2019 (Ottawa, ON) – The Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) and Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) recognize the commitment made on Sunday by NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh to implement protection for growers selling to the U.S. and taking immediate steps to restore Canada's preferential access under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA).

"It is a very positive sign to see this important issue being addressed in the NDP's campaign platform," said CPMA President Ron Lemaire. "It is critical to address barriers to trade within the fresh fruit and vegetable industry and we will be closely following commitments in all parties' platforms in the lead-up to the election."

The lack of payment protection in Canada is top-of-mind for fresh fruit and vegetable growers and sellers across Canada for the upcoming Federal Election. The industry has long advocated for a PACA-like trust in Canada. The highly perishable nature of fresh produce makes the industry uniquely vulnerable during bankruptcies, risking financial ruin for those affected.

This lack of financial protection results in tremendously high risk for Canadians selling fruits and vegetables south of the border. This high risk negatively impacts the sector's sustainability, decreases investments in innovation, threatens job opportunities for the middle class, and limits Canada's export potential.

Implementation of a statutory deemed trust would significantly reduce supply chain disruptions and the vulnerability of small businesses and of rural communities, while also improving trade relations with Canada's largest and most important trading partner.

"Canada's fruit and vegetable farmers are facing financial risks that threaten their competitiveness at a crucial time when consumers want to make healthy food choices and are being encouraged by their government to consume more fruits and vegetables," says CHC Executive Director Rebecca Lee. "It is important that all parties recognize this and we applaud the NDP for their commitment to making a payment protection program for produce growers finally a reality."

CHC and CPMA are pleased to see the NDP moving the issue forward in the lead-up to the Fall election and hope to see all parties supporting this issue within Canada's produce industry by making it a priority in their platforms.

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About the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA)

Based in Ottawa, Ontario, CPMA is a not-for-profit organization that represents a diverse membership made up of every segment of the produce industry supply chain who are responsible for 90% of the fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada. CPMA is fortunate to represent a sector that is both a significant economic driver for communities and that also improves the health and productivity of Canadians.

About the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC)

The Canadian Horticultural Council is an Ottawa-based voluntary, not-for-profit, national association that represents fruit and vegetable growers across Canada involved in the production of over 120 different types of crops on over 14,237 farms. Since 1922, CHC has advocated on important issues that impact Canada's horticultural sector, promoting healthy, safe and sustainable food, and ensuring the continued success and growth of our industry.