



PRESS RELEASE

Produce and Politics – Fruit and vegetable industry meets on Parliament Hill to advocate on behalf of Canada's fresh produce sector

February 25, 2020 (Ottawa, ON) – With an estimated impact of \$17.4 billion in real GDP, and supporting 249,000 jobs and \$9.8 billion in salaries and wages in 2017 alone, the produce industry and its supply chain are major contributors to Canada's economy. This importance is being emphasized today as representatives from all parts of Canada's fruit and vegetable industry meet with Parliamentarians and government officials on Parliament Hill.

The gathering is the latest annual *Farm to Plate* event hosted by both the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) and the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC). CPMA is a not-for-profit organization that represents over 860 member companies from every segment of the produce industry supply chain, who are responsible for 90 percent of the fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada. Their partner, CHC, is a 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, with farm cash receipts of \$5.7 billion in 2018.

Together, CPMA and CHC represent the produce sector from the farm gate to the dinner plate, and now is a critical time for the industry.

"Our annual *Farm to Plate* event is a major engagement between industry members and Parliamentarians, essential for government officials to remain informed on the issues that matter most to our sector," said Oleen Smethurst, CPMA Chair. "The fresh fruit and vegetable industry is a significant economic driver in Canada, while also being critical to the health of Canadians, and we value the opportunity to work collaboratively with government to progress our sector."

Today, the Canadian produce industry is addressing key issues including the need for financial protection for farmers and produce sellers, crop protection measures based on sound science, and support of the agricultural sector's sustainability initiatives such as climate adaptation practices, mitigation of plastic use and food loss and waste challenges

"Farmers have no financial protection from losses resulting from insolvent buyers, which is critical, because fresh produce is highly perishable and spoils more quickly than other food commodities. That's why we need complimentary legislation to ensure fruit and vegetable sellers are protected when their product is delivered but not paid for," says Brian Gilroy, President of CHC. "When it comes to

sustainability, we know that Canadians want to see our industry tackling problematic plastics and reducing food waste. And while they want appropriate regulation, we also know that Canadians can appreciate the important role crop protection plays in the fresh produce industry to ensure healthy crops, which supports food safety for Canadians and Canada's overall food security."

During their event today on Parliament Hill, CHC and CPMA will be tackling these complicated issues, and many more, as they meet with Canada's leaders and legislators.

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For more information, please contact:

Allan Gordon

Manager, Communications, Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Telephone: 613-226-4187 x225 | Cell: 613-878-3312

Email: agordon@cpma.ca

Karl Oczkowski

Manager, Communications, Canadian Horticultural Council

Telephone: 613-226-4880 x218

Email: KOczkowski@hortcouncil.ca

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 (CHC) 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, with farm cash receipts of \$5.7 billion in 2018. 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.