



## **Ontario Livestock Farmers Encouraged by Premier Ford's Strong Words of Support Livestock Farmers Already Hard Hit by Trump Trade Wars**

Ontario's livestock farm leaders expressed hope that help is on the way as their members across the province face a growing financial crisis spawned by American President Donald Trump's global trade wars.

Our optimism comes from comments made by Premier Ford in a government news release that was issued on Tuesday of this week following a roundtable discussion with the Premier, which included representatives from Ontario Pork, Ontario Veal and the Beef Farmers of Ontario. His statement read:

*"We will continue to do our part to protect Ontario farmers and farm workers, and we expect our federal counterparts to do the same. I will use every tool at my disposal to help the agri-food sector grow and protect the thousands of jobs it represents. Ontario is open for business, and I will not leave our farmers behind."*

- Premier Doug Ford, September 18, 2018

The Premier's words at the International Plowing Match & Rural Expo were particularly timely as they came the day before he headed to Washington for a NAFTA briefing, and days after Ontario's livestock farmers publicly sounded the alarm that they have become collateral damage in President Trump's trade wars.

President Trump's trade wars threaten the livelihood of our livestock farmers, particularly:

- the disruption of U.S. beef and pork exports to China and Mexico caused by escalating tariffs;
- the enormous drop in North American livestock prices caused by that disruption; and
- President Trump's decision to grant American farmers a massive US\$12 billion aid package, which puts our farmers at a substantial disadvantage as they try to compete on both sides of the border.

Financial losses are adding up for local farmers. Over the past six weeks, Ontario's pork farmers alone have suffered weekly losses in the millions of dollars. The numbers for Ontario's beef farmers are equally staggering and Ontario's veal farmers are not far behind.

Simple math tells you that Ontario's livestock farmers will be hard-pressed to continue to supply locally grown food to Ontarians, when they are losing over \$40 per hog and more than \$300 per head of cattle sold.

We are calling on both the provincial and the federal governments to work with us on an urgent basis to help Ontario's livestock farmers survive this growing financial crisis.

We are thankful that Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Minister, Ernie Hardeman, and his office have been quick to reach out following our expression of concern late last week. Meetings with senior officials in the Minister's office have been set to begin early next week.

Eric Schwindt, Chair, Ontario Pork

Joe Hill, President, Beef Farmers of Ontario

Tom Kroesbergen, Chair, Veal Farmers of Ontario