



*Long-Term Thinking
for Today's Issues*

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Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario **Ontario Food Labelling** **Position Statement**

Introduction

There is a strong sentiment in the farming community that there is the need for better labelling in Canada's grocery stores. Of prime importance is the inability for consumers to be able to identify foreign and Canadian product on their grocery store shelves. While fresh fruits and vegetables have strong labelling of their products, fresh meats and processed foods do not.

This document is intended to identify the issues surrounding labelling that concern farmers, weigh the strengths and weaknesses of possible approaches to meeting those concerns, and develop an action plan to address farmer's concerns.

Farmer Concerns

1. Lack of consumer awareness regarding the differences in health and safety regulations between our country and others. These regulations create cost differences, placing Canadian farmers at a disadvantage in their own marketplace.
2. Consumer's lack the ability to choose Canadian fresh meat products because origin is not required on the label.
3. There is no requirement that Canadian product be stocked on grocery store shelves.

Labelling improvement measures through Government Regulation

Government must regulate the labelling and availability of Canadian food on Canadian Grocery Store Shelves.

1. Impose import restrictions on any product that does not meet Canadian health, pesticide and animal welfare standards. This could be through labelling requirements to identify the differences between these products and Canadian ones OR by simply not allowing these products market access.

Labelling improvement measures through a Strategic Alliance with Processors and Retail

All segments of the value chain, with support government (advertising dollars) must work together to market an Ontario-oriented product.

1. Form a supply agreement that puts a steady supply of Ontario/Canadian products on Ontario grocery store shelves.

2. Encourage voluntary Country (or Province) of Origin Labelling on all cuts of meat on the grocery store shelf.

Education of the Consumer. Consumers must be educated about the concerns surrounding their food. This must be done through programming that is done through multiple media outlets – television, radio, internet – as well as food education in the classroom.

The Appointment of a Food System Ombudsman. An ombudsman responsible for examining issues within the entire food-chain could raise the awareness of issues for consumers. Issues of injustice and unfair practices could be brought to the ombudsman for review. All segments of the food system would fall within the jurisdiction

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