

May 2, 2014

Via E-mail

Dr. Deb Stark
Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Food
Deputy Minister, Rural Affairs

Dear Dr. Stark

RE: An Understanding Approach to Half-Load Season for Agriculture in 2014

The membership of the CFFO is concerned about the impact that extended half load seasons in some areas of the province will have on agribusinesses this spring. The winter of 2013-14 was a particularly harsh one and spring has been very slow in arriving this year, creating a critical time crunch for many agri-businesses. This exceptional year is calling for an exceptional approach to handling half-load restrictions for the agriculture sector.

The CFFO recognizes the need for balance on this matter. On the one hand, we recognize that there is the potential for damage to rural roads and to Ontario highways during this time of year from heavy equipment. On the other hand, this time of year is critical to the agriculture sector. Therefore, we hope that some gentle discretion on the need for balance in this matter be recognized for 2014.

The CFFO asks if the Ministry of Agriculture and Food could discuss the need for a cooperative and understanding approach to be taken by Ministry of Transportation officials regarding farm operators on the roads this year. In particular, we believe that inspectors should have the discretion in the levying of fines such that they only occur where there is also clear evidence of road damage being done.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.



Lorne Small, President
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario