

**Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs**

Office of the Minister

77 Grenville Street, 11th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1B3
Tel: 416-326-3074
www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA

**Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales**

Bureau du ministre

77, rue Grenville, 11^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1B3
Tél. : 416 326-3074
www.ontario.ca/MAAARO



October 5, 2020

Keith Robbins
General Manager
Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers
keith.robbs@opvg.org

Dear Mr. Robbins:

As Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs I am proud of Ontario's agri-food sector and I want to take this opportunity during Agriculture Week to express my gratitude for your efforts in maintaining our food supply chain during COVID-19.

This year threw challenges at us that we have never seen before – not due to weather conditions, trade agreements or crop disease but from the worst pandemic of our times. Through it all, you have kept our province fed by doing your part to keep the food chain strong.

You shared your concerns with me directly or through your farm organizations and together we found creative solutions to the ever-changing issues we were confronted with. While this year has presented many new challenges, I am proud of the way we have worked together to overcome them.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to ensure Ontarians have access to high-quality agricultural products that feed our province, our country and the world, even during the COVID-19 outbreak. These unprecedented times have shown us how important it is to have a steady, reliable food supply and to protect the health and safety of agri-food workers who help feed us. I am more committed than ever to promote all the good things that are grown here in Ontario and to relentlessly push the need for Ontarians to support our farmers by buying local.

I want to commend everyone on the steps that you have taken to make your workplaces safe and encourage you to increase your efforts as we see an increase in the number of cases. Our government remains committed to helping you through these challenges with the Enhanced Agri-food workplace protection program, a directory of PPE suppliers, the online toolkit and workplace guidelines.

.../2



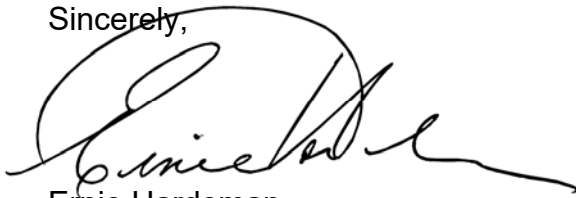
Good things grow in Ontario
À bonne terre, bons produits

Ministry Headquarters: 1 Stone Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2
Bureau principal du ministère: 1 Stone Road West, Guelph (Ontario) N1G 4Y2

I also want you to know that I have heard the concerns from many of you about the recent Freedom of Information (FOI) request for farm business names related to Farm Business Registrations and I can appreciate your feelings on this matter. As I've stated before, the government is obligated by law to comply with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. But I want to be clear that as this FOI request moves forward in the appeals process, like you, I will be watching very closely for the outcome.

Please accept my sincere thanks to all of you who contribute so much to our province every day. Your dedication deserves our constant gratitude and I am committed to working with you as we move forward to meeting today's challenges and the ones to come. I am encouraged because we are in this together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ernie Hardeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ernie Hardeman
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs