



May 22, 2026

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness  
Food Safety and Environmental Policy Branch  
1 Stone Road West, 2nd Floor S.W.  
Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2

***Sent via the Ontario Regulatory Registry***

**Re: *Farmland Security Act: a legislative framework to restrict foreign acquisition of Ontario farmland - 26-OMAFRA007***

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Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) appreciates the opportunity to comment on 26-OMAFRA007 *Farmland Security Act: a legislative framework to restrict foreign acquisition of Ontario farmland*. We would like to thank the province for bringing forward the framework that will restrict foreign acquisition of Ontario farmland and make it easier for our members to access Crown land. BFO represents the 19,000 beef farmers in Ontario by advocating in the areas of sustainability, animal health and care, environment, food safety, and domestic and export market development.

Keeping Canadian farmland under domestic ownership is considered essential for long-term food security, economic stability, and the preservation of rural communities. We support the intent of the proposed legislation in reinforcing that farmland remains within Ontario and Canadian ownership. At the same time, it will be important to ensure that the regulatory framework is clear and practical, and that it supports continued agricultural use without unintended barriers for producers.

BFO is in strong support of proposing to expand agricultural production in Northern Ontario by streamlining access to Crown land in the Clay Belt region. Developing farms in Northern Ontario, in the Great Northern Clay Belt area specifically, is the most significant economically sustainable plan for the region and will contribute substantial economic base activity for decades and future generations. There are almost 200 million acres of land in northern Ontario, and 16 million acres of greater Clay Belt land. Having sustainable beef farming operations on just a small fraction of these acres will reduce the threat of processing plants closing, and the increased production can be used to access new and growing markets in Ontario and around the globe.

While Ontario has land use policies intended to protect agricultural land, the province continues to lose farmland at an unsustainable rate to non-agricultural development. Because farmland lost

to development is permanently removed from agricultural production, stronger measures are needed to protect both farmland ownership and its long-term agricultural use. Future policies should prioritize preserving farmland for farmers and local food production, while preventing further corporate consolidation of agricultural land. Additionally, Crown land should not be opened or limited to non-agricultural corporate development or expansion, as this would further threaten farmland preservation and sustainable, community-based farming systems.

BFO supports the sale or long-term lease (i.e., 100-year lease) of these lands for agricultural production. We believe that for Crown land to be better accessed for agricultural production, and food sovereignty, that the province should return to the model that was partially implemented where government would identify parcels of land suitable for agriculture expansion, in sizes of 1500 workable acres. The province can provide critical assistance by committing to conduct the environmental and archeological assessments, Indigenous consultations, and other Crown land access hurdles to allow farmers who commit to bringing the land into agricultural production access to the land at an affordable cost without requiring potential users of that land to navigate the burdensome and challenging Crown land disposition process.

We recommend that the province expedite all applications for Crown land access and reinstate the Land Clearing Grant previously offered by the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). This program was critical in helping grow beef production in the north and if reinstated will show the province's willingness to once again help catalyze and accelerate development in agriculture in the north.

BFO appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) and strongly supports the proposed legislative framework to restrict foreign acquisition of Ontario farmland. Protecting Ontario's agricultural land is essential to ensuring its long-term availability for food production, supporting local farmers, and maintaining strong rural communities. As farmland continues to face pressure from non-agricultural development and increasing corporate consolidation, stronger safeguards are needed to preserve both farmland ownership and its continued agricultural use for future generations.

Sincerely,



Jason Leblond  
President