

November 7, 2016

The Honourable Diane LeBouthillier, M.P.  
Minister of National Revenue  
7th Floor, 555 MacKenzie Avenue  
Ottawa ON K1A 0L5

**Re: Ways to help Western farmers dealing with challenges of delayed harvest**

Dear Ms. LeBouthillier:

On behalf of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) and our 7,200 agri-business members, specifically those in Western Canada, we would like to bring to your attention concerns related to the poor weather conditions impacting harvest this year and ways you may be able to help address the resulting financial challenges facing producers.

The delayed harvest has left many farmers describing the situation as devastating - from widespread excessive moisture and deteriorating crop quality in the Prairies, to record snowfall, freezing crops in northeastern B.C. In fact, just a few weeks ago ag market analysts pegged the value of unharvested grain and oilseeds at approximately \$2 billion in Saskatchewan and \$1.6 billion in Alberta<sup>1</sup>. If one includes the value of unharvested crops in Manitoba, the prairie-wide value of unharvested farm commodities is at \$4 to \$5 billion.

As one Saskatchewan farmer said: “Financial risks that big will have repercussions well beyond the farming community. The entire industry, including farm groups, ag lenders, governments and grain handlers need to sit down and discuss strategies for managing through a potentially ruinous situation facing hundreds of farmers.”

CFIB is pleased that [Farm Credit Canada](#) is offering help to those facing financial hardship as a result of wet weather, saying it will consider deferral of principal payments or other loan payment schedule changes to help reduce the financial pressure on producers.

CFIB hopes that provincial and federal governments will also identify practical ways to help.

We appreciated the federal government’s recognition of past weather conditions, such as the 2015 Alberta drought and allowing affected farmers to access the Livestock Tax Deferral Provision. We believe there is more that can be done to help alleviate the financial challenges facing farmers as a result of excessive moisture that has delayed harvest and reduced the quality of this year’s crop.

Given the financial pressures facing many farmers by these events out of their control, we ask that you direct the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to offer flexibility and considerations in financial

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<sup>1</sup> Western Producer. <http://www.producer.com/2016/10/prairie-farmers-assessing-their-losses/>

deadlines for impacted agri-business owners. We also recommend allowing flexibility for the [Advance Payments Program](#) under the Ministry of Agriculture, so that farmers can obtain their cash-advances though some of their crops may still be on the ground. Practical solutions like these, can make a big difference for many producers.

We would be eager to hear more details on the Ministry's current plans to support agri-businesses through these difficult times. We would also be pleased to work with you to explore ways of helping agri-businesses deal with these difficulties.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping Western agri-business owners through this difficult harvest. As you know, small businesses are the backbone of our economy and agri-businesses play an integral role as both job creators and food producers. If you have any questions please do not hesitate in calling our office at 306-757-0000.

Sincerely,



Dan Kelly  
President and CEO



Marilyn Braun-Pollon  
Vice President, Prairie and Agri-business

CC Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food