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**national farmers union**  
*In Union Is Strength*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NFU SUPPORTS FARM WORKERS IN ONTARIO**

**GANANOQUE, Ont.**—The National Farmers Union has written to Helen Johns, Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food, urging her to legislate protections for farm workers' rights to unionize and to bargain collectively. Those rights were taken away from agricultural workers by the Ontario government in 1995 when it repealed the *Agricultural Labour Relations Act*.

“Farm workers employed by large companies need the right to organize into unions and to bargain collectively. The interests of farm workers and farmers are often the same: we need to stand together to balance the growing power of corporations within the food system,” said Ontario NFU Co-ordinator Peter Dowling.

To comply with a Supreme Court ruling on the issue, the Ontario government has indicated that it intends to proceed with legislation in the fall session that will prescribe the rights of farm workers. The National Farmers Union strongly believes that such legislation must include farm workers' rights to unionize and to bargain collectively. Merely legislating farm workers' right to “maintain associations” is meaningless and ineffective.

“I strongly urge you to include in your upcoming legislation, protections for farm workers' right to unionize and to bargain collectively,” the NFU told Minister Johns.

The NFU letter concluded: “Canada and Ontario are built upon a base of strong communities. Those communities are built upon a base of workers and farmers. It is important that your government maintains for farmers and workers the legislative tools that they can use to balance their interests against the interests of increasingly-powerful employers and other corporations. You cannot strengthen Ontario and its communities by weakening the positions of this province's farmers and workers.

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