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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**APRIL 15, 2003**

### **NFU MEETS WITH ONTARIO LIBERAL CAUCUS**

**GANANOQUE, Ont.**—The National Farmers Union met last week in Toronto with the Ontario Liberal Caucus. The NFU presented a brief that included a wide range of unique and affordable solutions to the problems plaguing Ontario farmers and citizens in rural communities. The brief is on the Ontario NFU website at [www.nfu.ca/on](http://www.nfu.ca/on)

The NFU told Caucus members that before farmers and government can choose solutions, they must understand the problems and the underlying causes of the farm income crisis. The NFU pointed out that Ontario farmers had quadrupled production and exports and, despite this, farmers' net incomes had *fallen*. "Others in the economy are treating farmers as an extractive resource. Close to \$70 billion in increased wealth generated by farm families has disappeared off Ontario farms over the past 25 years," said Dowling.

The delegation told caucus members that the NFU has been unique in advocating *solely* in the interests of farm families. "Other organizations talk about solutions that are good for 'agriculture' and for 'the industry.' The interests of family farmers are different from the interests of the industry. The 'industry' is draining the wealth from our farms and rural communities. Simultaneously advocating on behalf of the interests of the foxes and the chickens slows your progress in finding solutions for the chickens," said Dowling.

Ontario lost 13% of its farm families in the decade between 1991 and 2001. "The current policies are not working. New policies now on the table seem similar enough to existing ones that we can expect similar results. To stop the loss of farm families and the bleeding of wealth and people from rural areas, fundamentally different policies are necessary. The NFU, in its brief to the Liberal Caucus, presented some of that new thinking," said Dowling.

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