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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NFU WELCOMES NEW ONTARIO MINISTERS**

**GANANOQUE, Ont.**—The NFU is eager to work with Ontario's new Liberal government. "Our officials had a positive pre-election meeting with Steve Peters who is now Minister of Agriculture and Food and with Leona Dombrowsky who is now Minister of Environment. We look forward to a constructive relationship," said National Farmers Union Ontario Coordinator Peter Dowling. Agriculture Minister Peters is invited to meet with farmers from across the province on November 1 as part of the NFU's Ontario Fall Convention.

Ontario's new government is sworn in at a time of turmoil on family farms. "Our hog sector is in a shambles. Half of Ontario family farm hog producers have been pushed out of production in the past decade. At the same time, new mega-barn complexes are destroying quality of life for surrounding citizens and threatening the environment. We trust that the incoming government will have a positive new approach to livestock production and manure management," said Dowling.

The NFU is also looking for a more aggressive approach from the new government in its efforts to open the Canada-U.S. border to live cattle exports. "Farmers who produce replacement heifers for U.S. dairy farms have seen their markets closed completely. Beef producers have been even harder hit with prices for older cows collapsing and prices for calves and slaughter animals declining and volatile. All governments need to redouble their efforts to re-open the border, to compensate the farmers who have losses, and to begin the tough work of building a new foundation under our meat inspection system. A vital first step in these efforts is to implement mandatory BSE testing for all ruminants over 30 months of age," said Dowling.

The NFU will also work with the new government to build a better understanding of the real causes of the farm income crisis and to forge effective solutions. Dowling said: "Farmers watch fertilizer and other input prices rise again. Corporate profits in most of the food chain are several times the meager returns to farmers. We challenge the new Ontario government to break free from the global agricultural paradigm—low-priced products fed into food-processing and export markets with little acknowledgement of the negative effects on farm families and communities."

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