

National Office  
2717 Wentz Ave.  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
S7K 4B6  
Tel (306) 652-9465  
Fax (306) 664-6226  
E-Mail: nfu@nfu.ca



**national farmers union**

***In Union Is Strength***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SUNCOR REFINERY MUST PROVIDE FAIR MARKET FOR ONTARIO CORN**

In exchange for its commitment of \$22 million toward the construction of a Suncor ethanol refinery near Sarnia, the Ontario government must obtain guarantees that Ontario-produced corn will be purchased by the plant on a priority basis at fair prices, says Don Mills, Ontario regional coordinator for the National Farmers Union (NFU).

The NFU adopted a resolution at its regional meeting in St. Pauls earlier this month calling on the provincial government to adopt an "Ontario-first policy supporting the use of Ontario grain first in ethanol and biodiesel fuels."

The Ontario government announced April 26 it is contributing \$22 million toward construction of \$120 million Suncor refinery, slated for completion by mid-2006. The provincial government will require 5% ethanol content in gasoline by January 1, 2007.

While the NFU questions the alleged environmental benefits of ethanol, the Suncor plant will provide a potential market for Ontario corn. It will process about 20 million bushels of corn annually, producing 200 million litres of ethanol. However, the plant is located only about 11 kilometres from the US border.

"The ethanol plant won't help farmers in Ontario if the corn is imported from the US," stated Terry Byrne, an NFU member from Essex County. "Should our taxpayers be building a dumping ground for subsidized corn from the US?"

Byrne noted that one-third of the corn used in the production of ethanol actually returns to the feed grain market in the form of Dried Distiller Grains (DDGs), a high-protein, low-starch component which can be mixed with other feed grains. Canada already imports massive amounts of DDGs from the US.

The resolution adopted at the NFU Ontario regional meeting read:

*WHEREAS it is provincial policy to increase the production of ethanol and bio-fuels in Ontario, and;  
WHEREAS existing ethanol plants in Ontario have received and are receiving federal and provincial subsidies, and;*

*WHEREAS existing ethanol plants are importing vast quantities of subsidized US grains at values far below their acknowledged cost of production;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the province adopt an Ontario-first policy supporting the use of Ontario grain first in ethanol and bio-diesel fuels."*

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Contact: Don Mills, NFU Ontario Coordinator, Granton (519) 225-2163  
Terry Byrne, NFU Local 309, Essex County (519) 723-4752  
Terry Pugh, NFU Executive-Secretary (306) 652-9465