

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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FARM INCOME CRISIS TOPS AGENDA AT NFU ONTARIO CONVENTION

The farm income crisis, Terminator Technology, and the impact of global agribusiness on rural communities were some of the issues discussed at the National Farmers Union (NFU) Ontario regional convention held in Guelph April 1.

Don Mills, Joe Dama and Grant Robertson were returned to the NFU National Board of Directors following elections at the convention, while Kim Delaney was elected as the new Women's Advisory Committee member and Nigel Smith was chosen as the new Youth Advisory Committee member.

In addition to elections for the National Board, elections for the NFU Ontario Regional Council were also held. Murray Sharp of Lambton County and Peter Dowling of Frontenac County were elected to the council.

Resolutions adopted at the NFU Ontario convention included a call for municipalities to forgive the interest on municipal property tax arrears for up to three years "as a sign of solidarity with farmers in Canada." Delegates noted that most farmers are not in a position to take on additional debt financing in either the short or long term.

Other resolutions included:

- *a call for the NFU to step up lobby efforts among MPs and MPPs to reinforce the message from farm protest rallies;
- *a call for the federal government to stop imports of milk casein and other dairy ingredients which are undercutting dairy farmers' incomes;
- *support for supply-management and the Canadian Wheat Board.

Highlights of the convention included presentations by Dr. Duane Falk of the University of Guelph on Terminator Technology; and by Dr. Jennifer Sumner on Globalization and Rural Communities.

Don Mills, NFU Ontario Coordinator, said it was clear from Dr. Falk's presentation that corporate agribusiness wants Terminator Technology as a tool to extract more money from the pockets of farm families. There is no other need for suicide seeds."

He added that Dr. Sumner's findings on the devastating effects of corporate globalism on rural communities is unfortunately all too familiar to farm families here in Ontario.

Joe Dama, NFU Board member from Leamington, said there was a great deal of energy in the convention hall. "The grassroots of the NFU is pushing forward real solutions to build a healthy food system based on family farms and vibrant rural communities," he said.

Grant Robertson, NFU Board member from Paisley, Ontario, said, "To date, government seems to think increasing numbers of farmers taking off-farm jobs is some kind of solution. NFU members were clear that effective Risk Management Plans must be implemented now to allow farm families to survive until real long-term solutions to a dysfunctional marketplace and deepening farm income crisis are in place."

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Contact: Don Mills, NFU Coordinator (519) 225-2163
Joe Dama, NFU Board Member (519) 326-7424
Grant Robertson, NFU Board Member (519) 353-4033
Terry Pugh, NFU Executive-Secretary (306) 652-9465