

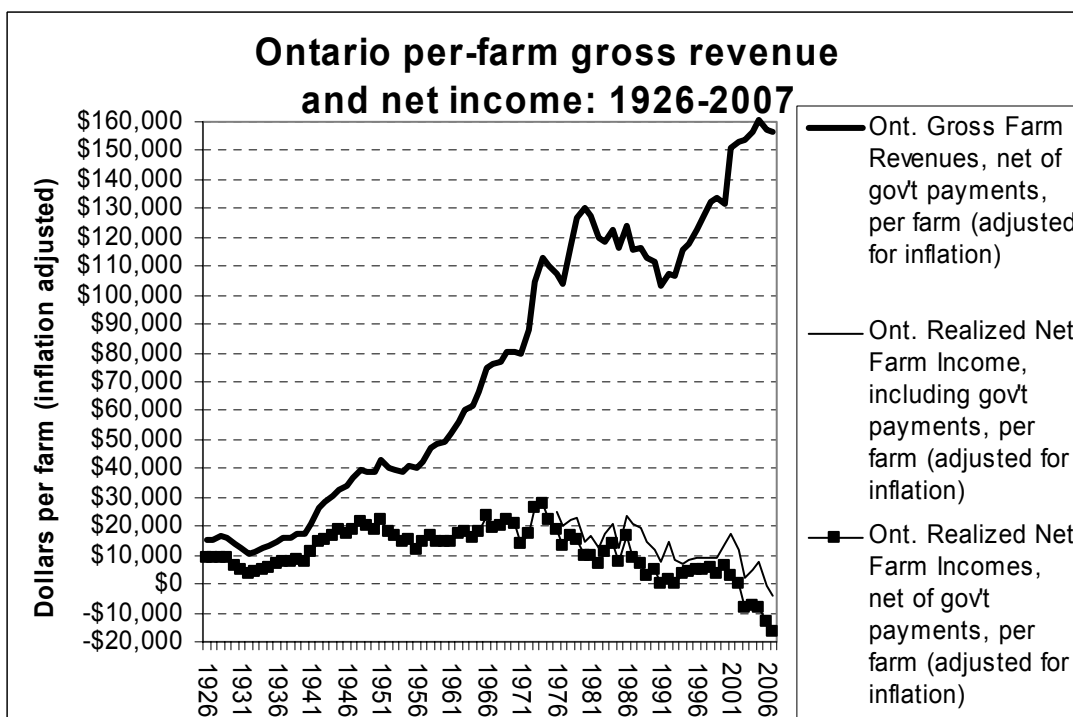
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 14, 2007

AG. POLICY FRAMEWORK YEARS WORST IN ONTARIO HISTORY

PAISLEY, Ont.—In terms of Ontario farmers’ net incomes, the most recent five years have been the worst in history—the worst *by far*. Those five years of record low net incomes—2003-2007—are the years of the federal government’s Agriculture Policy Framework (APF).

The graph below is from Statistics Canada data. It shows the drop in Ontario net farm incomes, from already low levels in the 1990s, to the record-low levels of the most recent five years. Note that while net incomes hit record lows, gross revenues hit record highs.



“When you look at the data, the most recent five years really stand out. The federal government’s Ag. Policy Framework has been a disaster for farmers and rural communities,” said Ontario NFU Board member Grant Robertson.

“The federal and provincial governments’ APF policies have perpetrated a devastating magic trick,” said Robertson. “They’ve turned a record average gross revenue of \$150,000 per farm into an average realized net income of negative \$15,000 per farm. We need to reverse the disastrous policies of the past five years.”

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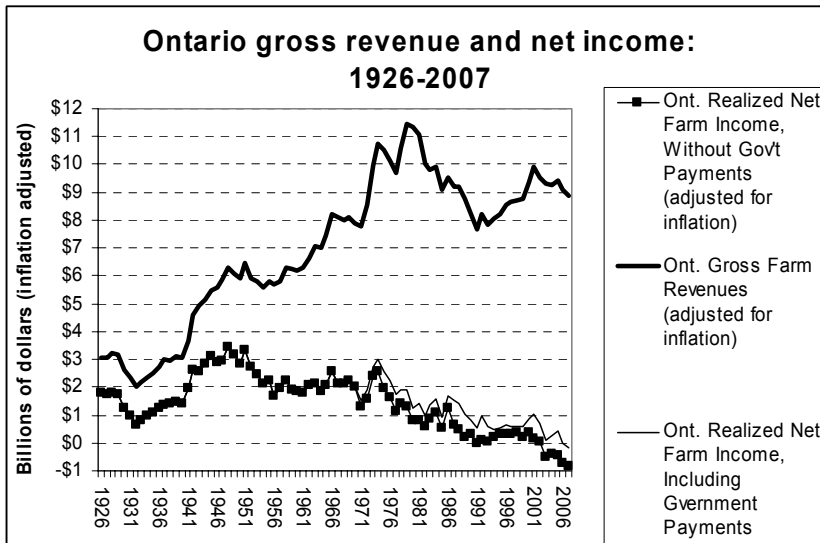
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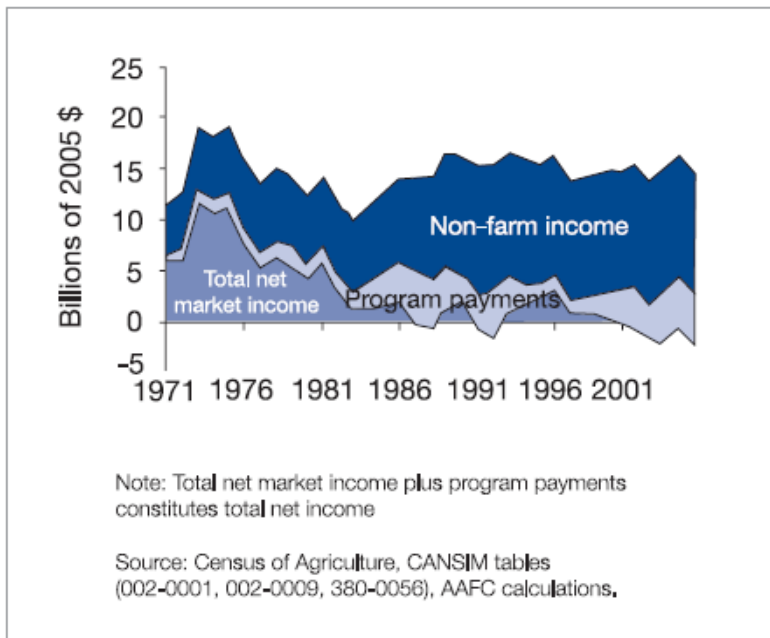
Backgrounder to the NFU's February 14, 2007 news release

Some policy makers and analysts have raised objections to the NFU's practice of listing farmers' revenues and incomes on a "per-farm" basis. The implication is that doing so somehow distorts the data and creates the illusion of an income crisis. The graphs that follow show this is not the case.

The graph below plots farmers' revenues and net income in aggregate, in billions of dollars. Note that the net income declines are just as sharp and steep in this version as in the version that uses per-farm numbers. The past five years remain the worst in history.



This next graph is produced by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. It graphs net revenues and incomes for all of Canada. Note that it, like the NFU's graphs, shows that farmers' net incomes from the market (the bottom wedge) collapsed to around zero in the mid-'80s, and that they've been consistently in negative territory over the past five years.



The farm income crisis is very real. It is not a product of data manipulation. It is a product of destructive federal and provincial policies and rising agribusiness power.