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**national farmers union**

***In Union Is Strength***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**REPRIEVE FOR ABATTOIR AT KINGSTON PRISON FARM A POSITIVE STEP**

The decision by Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to keep the abattoir at Pittsburgh Institution in Kingston operating indefinitely is a “positive step,” says Peter Dowling, a board member of the National Farmers Union (NFU) Local in Kingston, Ontario.

The Pittsburgh Institution is one of six prison farms which were slated for closure by the Harper government. The institutions are located on prime agricultural land. The Pittsburgh Institution houses a privately-operated abattoir which provides training for inmates and also provides a valuable service to the local community. The decision by CSC to keep the abattoir open indefinitely came after a series of supportive activities in Ottawa and in local communities, and several meetings with CSC staff.

“The meetings we had with the Corrections staff were very useful, and they were able to see the benefits of maintaining the abattoir,” stated Dowling. “This decision is very beneficial to the local food system and a positive step along the way, but it’s not the final answer. We have a meeting with the Minister for Public Safety scheduled and we are going to make some strong arguments for maintaining the prison farms across Canada.”

The NFU Local in Kingston is spearheading efforts to build public awareness of, and support for, this issue. Full details are available online at <http://www.nfuontario.ca/316/prison-farm-campaign> .

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