



National Farmers Union
Union Nationale des Fermiers



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Open letter to the People of Wallonia and their Representatives in the Walloon Parliament

As farmers organized in the National Farmers Union in Canada, we are encouraged to see that your elected assembly has taken a strong stance against the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement between the EU and Canada (CETA).

We are sure that in weighing pros and cons of this deal, you are able to point out the losses it would bring for farmers in your region. As Canadian farmers, we also have very concrete concerns about this agreement. CETA would damage our protected dairy market, betray farmers' interests in intellectual property protection related to seeds, obstruct local food procurement and further entrench the deterioration of transportation and regulatory policy.

Less tangible, but even more dangerous, are CETA's Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanisms and other ratchet clauses, which fundamentally restrict jurisdictions' ability to pass laws and regulations to uphold or improve social standards, grassroots economic interests and environmental protection. If an elected government uses its legislative power in the public interest, under CETA it risks being sued or forced to pay for lost future profits claimed by so-called foreign investors. As members of a democratic nation, this is unacceptable to us.

We congratulate you for your strong stance against CETA in spite of all the pressure on you to abandon this principled position. We want to let you know that in Canada, public debate on CETA has been more of a public relations campaign than a true, informed analysis of its consequences. While opposition to CETA appears to be weak in Canada, rest assured that your analysis of CETA highlights concerns shared by many Canadian civil society organizations, including our own.

Keep up the good work of protecting your democratic rights.

Sincerely,

Jan Slomp
President, National Farmers Union in Canada