

April 3, 2020

The Honourable Ernie Hardeman  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
77 Grenville Street  
11th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1B3

**RE: Supporting the food supply chain during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Dear Minister Hardeman,

Thank you for your continued leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the situation evolves, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is receiving concerns from the business community and communicating them to all levels of government.

The OCC wishes to echo the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Agri-Business Association, and Food and Beverage Ontario in their request for a temporary exemption from the reduced load period weight restrictions on all Ontario highways and roads. This exemption will facilitate the movement of foodstuffs, farm inputs, and products necessary for crop production as well as the distribution and delivery of essential finished food products – all of which are critical during this period of crisis.

We understand that the Province of Quebec has implemented similar temporary exemptions to improve the efficiency of food and food production supplies moving from farm to consumer, and so believe it appropriate for Ontario to do the same.

Public health and safety are priorities for all Ontario businesses. We will continue to monitor and assess new developments pertaining to COVID-19 closely and work with our members, partners, and all levels of government to provide support to Ontario business.

Sincerely,



Rocco Rossi  
*President and CEO*  
*Ontario Chamber of Commerce*