
Premier's Statement on U.S. NAFTA Supply Management Demands

October 17, 2017 2:31 P.M.

Premier Kathleen Wynne released the following statement today on NAFTA and supply management:

"Ontario's farmers and processors have always been a pillar of our province's economy, working hard to meet the demand for safe, high-quality food for consumers on both sides of the border.

I am steadfast in my belief that Canada's supply management system supports a strong and competitive agri-food sector, and I will continue to stand up for Ontario farmers and producers to defend the integrity of our system.

A proposal to dismantle the supply management system for dairy, chicken, eggs and turkey within the next 10 years as part of NAFTA negotiations is unprecedented. Ontario stands in agreement with Canada that negotiating supply management is simply a non-starter.

Canada's supply managed system provides stability and balances domestic supply to demand, directly supporting nearly 200,000 jobs on more than 5,500 family farms. In the interest of protecting those workers and their families, Ontario cannot support this proposal, which threatens to damage our strong and closely connected agri-food economy. We will continue to work with the federal government in the fight to make sure the supply management system stays in place.

The agri-food sector is a key economic driver for Ontario and many U.S. states. Last year, two-way agri-food trade between Ontario and the U.S. totalled nearly \$29 billion. Further, the U.S. enjoys a \$6.4 billion trade surplus with Ontario in agri-food products, and dairy trade between the U.S. and Canada favours the U.S. by a ratio of around five to one.

My priority is defending the hundreds of thousands of agri-food workers in Ontario. To that end, I will continue to step up my engagement with partners across the U.S. to underscore the value of our agri-food trade to our economies.

In addition, my colleague, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Jeff Leal, will be in Colorado later today meeting with U.S. and Mexican government leaders, where he will continue to defend the interests of Ontario producers, including the supply managed sector.

Minister Leal will also continue to engage Ontario's producers to gain their insights on both the opportunities and challenges we are facing moving forward.

We will continue to work with and advocate for Ontario's farmers and producers to protect the strength of our province's agri-food sector and to ensure that their concerns continue to be well-represented in NAFTA negotiations."

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