



Diane Finley
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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

March 17, 2020

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau
Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada
1341 Baseline Road Tower 7, Floor 9, Room 149
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

Dear Minister Bibeau,

It has come to my attention that your government is planning to close the border to the Seasonal Agricultural Work Program and the Temporary Foreign workers after 12pm tomorrow, and there is no timeline on when these essential workers will be able to enter the country to assist farmers with their crops.

I understand and support the need to combat COVID-19, but closing access to this program and preventing workers from entering Canada will have devastating affects on our already strained agricultural sector and will drastically impact our food supply in Canada.

My riding of Haldimand-Norfolk is the most agriculturally diverse riding in the country. We not only supply Canada with much of its food, but the world as well. The reason why we are able to do that is because of programs like the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

Our farmers employ over 6,400 seasonal and temporary foreign workers, and will not be able to replace that workforce if those workers aren't able enter the country for planting season. One farmer alone is depending on the arrival of 18 workers this week to support \$5 million in crops. The workers provided by these programs determine whether crops get planted this year, right across the country.

I urge you to work with your colleagues to develop measures immediately to allow for this program to continue. The food security of country depends on it.

Sincerely,


The Honourable Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.
Haldimand-Norfolk

Cc: Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau

Cc: The Hon. Chrystia Freeland

Cc: The Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos

Cc: The Hon. Navdeep Singh Bains

Cc: Hon. William Sterling Blair

Cc: The Hon. Patricia Hajdu

Cc: The Hon. Mélanie Joly

Cc: The Hon. William Francis Morneau

Cc: The Hon. Carla Qualtrough

Cc: The Hon. Marc Miller

Cc: The Hon. Kirsty Duncan