

# Letter sent to the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau: Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

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**Thursday, December 2, 2021**



The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road

Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Via Email: [marie-claude.bibeau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:marie-claude.bibeau@parl.gc.ca)

November 29, 2021

Dear Minister Bibeau,

On behalf of our member Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade representing more than 1,700 businesses across Prince Edward Island (PEI), the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce (ACC) is asking the Government of Canada to work with the provinces, our Canadian consulates, and other officials to ensure that a decision with such a detrimental impact to the PEI economy is based on science and fact.

The \$1.3 billion potato industry in PEI is a massive economic driver in the province. This export ban will cost in excess of \$120 million in revenues, and many millions more as the price of potatoes is deflated due to an oversupply within Canada.

PEI farmers have been managing the issue of potato warts for 20 years. In this instance, when the potatoes impacted by the wart were discovered, they were immediately quarantined. The impacted potatoes were never destined for export. Potato wart is not dangerous to human health, which the Prime Minister agreed with during last week's question period when he stated, "that there is no scientific basis for the ban on potatoes."

COVID-19 has created many global supply chain issues and there are presently food shortages across the world. Halting the export of a staple, like potatoes, will cause perishable food to be unnecessarily destroyed despite safety protocols in place, no risk to human health, and a minimal risk of the wart spreading to other potatoes.

Our Federal Government can play a leading and active role in helping to educate our trading partners and advocating for one of our long-standing industries, rather than arbitrarily devastating an entire province based upon what a trading partner may or may not do. Moving forward, we urge you to work with the wider strength of our partners and officials to support the PEI potato industry in a Team Canada approach.

The Atlantic Chamber of Commerce stands with our members, the Government of Prince Edward Island, and the PEI Potato Board as we call for the Federal Government to immediately address this urgent matter and remedy this issue so that PEI potato farmers can resume exports to the United States.

Sincerely,

Sheri Somerville,  
CEO | Atlantic Chamber of Commerce

Robert Godfrey  
Chief Executive Officer | Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce

Tara Maddix  
Executive Director | Greater Summerside Chamber of Commerce

Lori MacGregor  
Executive Director | Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce

Julie Corbett  
Executive Director | Kensington and Area Chamber of Commerce

Marion Miller  
President | South Shore Chamber of Commerce

Tammy Rix  
Executive Director | West Prince Chamber of Commerce

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PO Box 2291, Windsor, NS B0N 2T0 – (902)698-0265 – [tracy@atlanticchamber.ca](mailto:tracy@atlanticchamber.ca)