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March 28, 2022

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Veteran's Affairs and MP for Cardigan

Sean Casey, MP for Charlottetown

Bobby Morrissey, MP for Egmont

Heath MacDonald, MP for Malpeque

House of Commons

Ottawa, ON

K1A 0A6

*Delivered Via Email*

PEI Members of Parliament:

The Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce (GCACC) and our 1100+ members are writing to thank the federal government for its efforts to restore the movement of PEI table potatoes to the United States. Further, we echo the calls from the agriculture industry to continue to push for the return of the movement of seed and processing potatoes, both domestically and into the United States.

As you are aware, the PEI potato industry contributes \$1.3 Billion annually to the PEI economy and directly impacts the business community throughout the province. This past winter, as the collective business community has strived to rebuild and return to normal, the absence of \$120 million in spending resulting from the border closure did not go unnoticed.

The GCACC is a strong advocate for the free movement of goods and services across our borders. Canada is an exporting nation that has built a reputation as a trusted international partner that follows rules-based trade. Canada is also a strong believer in science-based decision making. What we have witnessed in these past few months is disconcerting for a business community that relies on partners outside of our provincial and domestic borders.

We need all aspects of our federal government fighting for us. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is an integral component to the success of the food producers in this country, as it facilitates their ability to reach important markets around the world. This crisis has illustrated to many that its structure lacks the capacity to address this problem alone. While a potential restructuring of this organization is a consideration for the future, we call on the government to employ the expertise of Global Affairs Canada to resolve this trade dispute once and for all.

We also support the PEI Potato Board's call for revisions to the existing Ministerial Order related to this issue, so that only impacted fields with discoveries of wart are impacted and the rest of the province can move forward. Further, we ask that the matter of compensation be revisited given that there remains potential for further destruction of potatoes.

Our members look forward to the continued progress on this issue as the federal government builds on their recent success related to table potatoes.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Barb Smith', with a stylized, cursive script.

Barb Smith  
*2021-22 GCACC Board President*