



November 4, 2014

Hon. Kathleen Wynne  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building, Room 281, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier,

**Re: Northern Beef Expansion**

The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) would like to request your government's support of a strategy to encourage beef farming in northern Ontario. The North Claybelt region has been determined as a suitable location for experimental purposes.

Your government has recognized the tremendous agricultural opportunities by listing agriculture expansion in the north as a priority within the current Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Premier, as the former Minister of Agriculture and Food, you are aware of the current challenges and opportunities facing the beef industry in Ontario. The province is in an ideal position to transform threats to the beef industry into opportunities for growth.

Currently, beef production is declining in the province which poses risks to processing plant jobs as well as the Ontario beef supply system. Research has been undertaken to assess the viability of expanding beef production in northern Ontario that would benefit the beef industry and improve the economic stability of the region.

Developing farms in northern Ontario would represent a significant and substantial economic investment into the region that would have profound long-term benefits. It is estimated that adding 30 economically viable farms per year for the next 20 years would generate more than \$3 billion in economic activity for northern communities.

It is important to take into consideration the market reality both within and beyond Ontario's borders. Supply of beef is decreasing for a number of reasons including environmental conditions and a declining land base available for agriculture. There are millions of hectares of potential agricultural land within northern Ontario which presents a significant opportunity. Since much of this land is currently classified as Crown land, the province can play a leadership role in ensuring that farmers have greater accessibility to acquiring land for agricultural purposes. This would include making Crown land available to farmers who commit to bringing the land into agricultural production, which your government expressed it was willing to explore.

# FONOM

The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities

FONOM appreciates the efforts that this government has made towards enhancing the agriculture industry in the province and for recognizing the growth potential in northern Ontario. We ask that your government continue to support initiatives such as this that will provide economic benefits to both northerners and the province alike.

Sincerely,



Alan Spacek  
President

cc. Hon. Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines  
Hon. Bill Mauro, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Hon. Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
Hon. David Oraziotti, Minister of Government and Consumer Services  
David Stewart, Executive Director, Beef Farmers of Ontario