



Turkey Farmers of Canada welcomes the federal government announcement of support for farmers, as a first step

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mississauga, ON, May 8, 2020 – Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC) appreciates the announcement made by the federal government for the \$252 million emergency fund for farmers due to COVID-19, however, TFC is concerned the announcement does not fully address difficulties faced by farmers and food processors, including turkey farmers.

TFC is anticipating a substantial reduction in turkey production this year due to COVID-19. As processing plants experience reduced capacity, increased costs due to newly required health and safety equipment and practices, and reduced demand at foodservice and in some retail channels, there are direct ramifications on farm.

“While we appreciate the support by the Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture shown for the agriculture and agri-food sector, like others, we feel this is only a first step. Additional commodity-specific programs and funding will be required to address the losses faced by the turkey value chain,” said Darren Ference, Chair, Turkey Farmers of Canada. “The structure of the funding announcement appears to have little readily available support for turkey farmers and our industry. We remain concerned about how our farmers will manage increased costs due to COVID-19 on farm.”

The \$50 million buy back of surplus food will assist some areas of agriculture, but lacks specifics. We look forward to working with the government to ensure the program meets the needs of our sector and others.

While the AgriRecovery and AgriStability programs are options for producers, not all will qualify and it remains to be seen if they are effective in the context of this pandemic. COVID-19 has added to the uncertainty Canadian turkey farmers are facing, as the CUSMA implementation is close and the CPTPP is in year three of implementation.

More work needs to be done. TFC remains committed to working with the federal government to create programs that are effective for the turkey industry.

About Turkey Farmers of Canada

Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC) is a national organization representing Canada's 530+ turkey farmers. Created in 1974 under the federal *Farm Products Agencies Act*, the Agency encourages cooperation throughout the Canadian turkey industry, promotes the consumption of turkey meat, and oversees the supply management system for turkey in Canada.

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