



July 3, 2020

Dear Minister Freeland,

On behalf of the AGgrowth Coalition, we would like to express our appreciation for your office's continued dialogue with Coalition members<sup>1</sup> on the need for urgent reforms of Canada's Business Risk Management (BRM) programs. We are writing you today to follow up on those discussions and provide an update on the Coalition's continued outreach activities, while requesting your continued support in securing reforms that would ensure BRM programs are responding to Canadian farmers' evolving needs.

The AGgrowth Coalition was established by farmers to advocate for a comprehensive reform of risk management programming. The agriculture sector wants to continue to work in partnership with governments across the country to establish the right policies and programs to better reflect modern farming needs in Canada. Prior to the emergence of COVID-19, farmers were already struggling in the face of lost international markets, increasing production risks due to climate change, and the continual rise in the cost of agricultural production. The disruptions, lost markets, rising costs and uncertainties presented by COVID-19 only exacerbate these existing risks, lending added urgency to the need for BRM program enhancements.

We have been pleased to hear that the mandate to review risk management programs with a special focus on AgriStability is of critical importance to Minister Bibeau and the Government of Canada. The work on BRM programming by the Federal Provincial Territorial (FPT) Agriculture Ministers is important to AgGrowth and the farmers it represents. Given the collaborative nature of Canada's FPT agricultural policy framework, under which BRM programs are negotiated, we welcome your continued attention on this matter as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Given our shared interest in reforming these critical BRM programs, we hope that you will work closely with the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, and your FPT colleagues, to secure urgent reforms to ensure Canada's BRM programs provide the risk management support farmers need during these difficult times.

In recognition of this shared jurisdiction and the need to find collaborative solutions, Coalition members have undertaken outreach with provincial governments across Canada to impress upon them the importance of immediate BRM reforms, but also to ascertain their willingness to contribute additional BRM support. We wish to take this opportunity to provide you with an update on the status of our continued outreach to provincial governments.

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<sup>1</sup> AGgrowth Coalition members include: The Canadian Canola Growers Association, Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Canadian Horticultural Council, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Grain Growers of Canada, and the National Sheep Network.



AGgrowth Coalition members are pleased to note that Quebec, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia have each committed, unilaterally, to increase the level of BRM support available to their farmers through provincial AgriStability enhancements. Meanwhile, the Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Doug Ford, has indicated his governments' willingness to lend their support to the Federal government in enhancing AgriStability support through a return to an 85% payment trigger and removal of the Reference Margin Limit. Furthermore, Nova Scotia's Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Keith Colwell, has also indicated a willingness to work with his FPT colleagues to enhance Canada's BRM suite.

We are aware that the Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba continue to note that their fiscal situations do not permit increased BRM spending at this time. Nonetheless, the AGgrowth Coalition believes the breadth of federal and aforementioned provincial support for BRM improvements provides a strong foundation to move these critical reforms forward, addressing this key mandate and platform commitment. While the lack of unanimity presents a challenge to timely progress, it is a surmountable one if the existing breadth of support can be sufficiently mobilized.

The AGgrowth Coalition hopes this information will be of value in your continued dialogue with provincial and territorial colleagues, as a common understanding of the FPT landscape is critical to identifying and implementing a path forward. While we continue to reach out to Governments across Canada on this key priority, we look to your office, alongside Minister Bibeau and the Government of Canada, for leadership in securing this alignment on future program improvements. We remain at your assistance at this critical juncture for changes to Business Risk Management Programs.

Sincerely,

<i>original signed by</i>	<i>original signed by</i>	<i>original signed by</i>
Markus Haerle Chair, AGgrowth Coalition	Jeff Nielsen Vice-chair, AGgrowth Coalition	Chris van den Heuval Vice-chair, AGgrowth Coalition

*\* Canada's AGgrowth Coalition is a united voice to create new conversations for growth. The coalition is working towards comprehensive reform of business risk management programming for Canadian farmers.*

*The Coalition includes the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA), Canadian Canola Growers Association (CCGA), Grain Growers of Canada (GGC), Canadian Horticultural Council, (CHC), Grain Farmers of Ontario (GFO), and National Sheep Network (NSN) with both the Canadian Pork Council (CPC) and Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) participating as research partners.*