



National Farmers Union - NB
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Statement from the National Farmers Union in New Brunswick on the Veterinary and Laboratory Phase out and Motion 35

The NFU-NB represents small and medium scale farms who are most affected by the loss of services and increases in costs. Our members produce all commodities from all areas of the province.

Farmers and veterinarians have some of the highest levels of career related stress in the country. They deserve respect and fair treatment, as do the union of laboratory workers and all staff in those jobs. These hard workers deserve to thrive in their industries, not struggle to survive.

Farmers and the public have been clear that the lack of consultation, conversation, and advice from the industry, veterinarians, laboratory experts have increased stress and a sense of mistrust. They have been clear that phasing out services is not the answer to challenges in the sustainability and success of the program.

Farm numbers continue to decline, realized net farm income continues to decline, and loss of programs, research, and services will not improve the agricultural landscape. Despite the agri-food sector in New Brunswick representing the highest portion of GDP, the agricultural sector has been underfunded and underappreciated for decades. No government or party is wholly responsible for the situation we are in, the same cuts were announced in 2000 and after a year were rescinded by the government at that time. We appreciate all who have opposed this plan; this issue has highlighted the ongoing challenges that farmers have every day and we highlight the work of the public and ordinary farmers who have petitioned, protested, and organized.

We disagree with the phase out of these programs and services and the timeline proposed by the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries (DAAF). DAAF has committed to having no gaps in service, but we continue to have concerns. We believe there are alternatives to the end of veterinarian services, and there are options for sustainable and successful program delivery. Animal welfare and farmer livelihoods should not be up for debate. Our supply management system, the pillar of Canadian agriculture, is at risk. Laboratory services are essential for animal health emergency management and other risk mitigation.

We greatly appreciated how high of a priority food security is for the entire government, mentioned several times by all parties throughout the debate of motion 35 on May 14th. We look forward to working with government and representatives on programs, strategies and policies to reduce food insecurity in the province, and increase our small and medium scale farms.

We will be meeting with the Minister and Department of Agriculture, on this important topic May 27th. Dialogue between our members, the public and the government are key to recognizing the important work of farmers, veterinarians, and laboratory workers.

The National Farmers Union in New Brunswick is an accredited general farm organization. We work to promote a food system that is built on a foundation of financially viable small and medium scale farms that produce high quality, using regenerative practices.

Strong Communities. Sound Policies. Sustainable Farms.

Des communautés solidaires et des politiques sensées pour une agriculture durable.