

## Write to your local paper

A letter to the editor in your local newspaper is a great way to make people in your community aware of an issue that affects your livelihood, family and community. It can make your neighbours aware of the issue, but also local, provincial and federal politicians. And your story can have an influence on these policy makers' decisions. Use these tips to develop your own letter, or use [the template provided](#).

### Letter to the Editor – Tips

1. **Get the editor's attention with a dramatic fact or short statement of the issue. Use first person (I).** Example, *"As one of over 14,000 Canadian fruit and vegetable farmers, I am at risk of critical financial losses as a result of the lack of protection by Canada's government."*
2. **Explain the issue.** Be simple and clear and describe the issue in a way that your neighbours would understand: *"The economic uncertainty and threats to food security brought by the COVID-19 pandemic have revealed a glaring hole in Canada's insolvency legislation. There is currently no financial protection in place for growers and sellers of fresh produce, which leaves our sector in a dangerously vulnerable position."*
3. **Tell your story.** *"Growing, harvesting, packing, and marketing fruits and vegetables comes with a number of risks. Overhead and capital costs continue to rise, while returns are delayed until the product is sold and payment is collected down the supply chain – usually long after the farmer or other seller has passed on their product. Unfortunately, the COVID business environment has put farmers in an even more vulnerable position. The pandemic has and will, over the next two years, drive businesses into bankruptcy, with impacts along the supply chain and ultimately to fruit and vegetable growers."*
4. **Describe the scope of the problem, and give stats. Use the Issues Brief for more information.** *"Our families put a significant amount money on the line to run their operations, and to provide our communities with relied upon food sources. It is unreasonable and unjust for farmers like myself to assume these risks without having an assurance that all financial commitments assured to my business are paid come the end of the year."*
5. **Explain a solution and benefit.** *"The solution is simple: Dr. R.C.C. Cuming, a professor at the University of Saskatchewan, College of Law, has drafted proposed legislation based on the concept of a "deemed trust." It has been reviewed by Industry Canada and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. It requires little work from government other than tabling the legislation to be passed into law. The impact of this legislation would mean thousands of Canadian fruit and vegetable farmers could know that their operations are no longer in jeopardy based on the whims of a buyer. It could save thousands of farms."*

### Letter to the Editor – Templates

Dear Editor,

As one of over 14,000 Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable farmers, I am constantly vulnerable to critical financial risk thanks to a lack of protection from losses incurred as a result of insolvent buyers. The economic uncertainty and threats to food security brought by the COVID-19 pandemic have revealed a

glaring hole in Canada's insolvency legislation. There is currently no financial protection in place for growers and sellers of fresh produce, which leaves our sector in a dangerously vulnerable position.

Growing, harvesting, packing, and marketing fruits and vegetables comes with a number of risks. Overhead and capital costs continue to rise, while returns are delayed until the product is sold and payment is collected down the supply chain – usually long after the farmer or other seller has passed on their product. Unfortunately, the COVID business environment has put farmers in an even more vulnerable position. The pandemic has and will, over the next two years, drive businesses into bankruptcy, with impacts along the supply chain and ultimately to fruit and vegetable growers.

Our families put a significant amount of money on the line to run their operations, and to provide our communities with relied upon food sources. It is unreasonable and unjust for farmers like myself to assume these risks without having an assurance that all financial commitments assured to my business are paid come the end of the year.

The solution is simple: Dr. Ron C.C. Cuming of University of Saskatchewan College of Law has drafted a turnkey legislative proposal based on the concept of a "Deemed Trust." It requires little work from government other than tabling the legislation to be passed into law, and would represent no cost to government. The impact would mean thousands of Canadian fruit and vegetable growers could know that their operations are no longer in jeopardy based on the whims of a buyer.

The Government of Canada needs to create a deemed trust to protect Canada's fruit and vegetable growers from the constant and great risk of losing the value of their produce—and perhaps—even their farms.

Sincerely,