



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Consultations of the Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

**“THE BALL IS IN THE CONSERVATIVES’ COURT;
THEY HAVE TO DO SOMETHING”**

– André Bellavance

Ottawa, Friday, April 27, 2007 – “The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food’s consultations on business risk management programs and a new agriculture and agri-food policy have clearly identified a number of expectations of Quebec farmers. The federal government must now act on the evidence it heard, overhaul the Agriculture Policy Framework and propose initiatives to address the farm income crisis,” stated today the Bloc Québécois Critic for Agriculture and Agri-Food and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, **André Bellavance**.

“The ideas put forward by Quebec farmers must be considered in the development of a new agriculture and agri-food policy. This sector needs innovative solutions in order to meet the challenges it is facing, and the stakeholders who stated their views during the consultations are in the best position to suggest solutions that address their everyday needs. So the ball is now in the federal government’s court. It has a duty to use the information we gathered to improve the Agriculture Policy Framework in order to guarantee farmers a basic income to allow them to grow,” added the other Bloc Québécois member of the Committee during these consultations, the Member for Montcalm, **Roger Gaudet**.

The Member for Richmond-Arthabaska took the opportunity to recall that the Bloc Québécois supports the objectives of the *Union des producteurs agricoles* for the renewal of the Agriculture Policy Framework, which are: to ensure that Canada’s agriculture policy complements Quebec’s policy, to obtain sufficient leeway to maintain and develop Quebec’s programs; to ensure that the required funding is available; to ensure that program delivery is entrusted to existing Quebec organizations; and to maintain supply management as a risk management tool.

“The next generation of farmers was also an important topic of discussion during the consultations in Quebec. This has always been one of the Bloc Québécois’s main concerns and the Bloc raised it again with motion M-282. This motion calls for a substantial advance as it stipulates that Ottawa must recognize the importance of facilitating the transfer of farm ownership between generations in a family,” concluded **André Bellavance**.

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