



# Union Fundamentals and Directions

2017-2019



POUVOIR NOURRIR  
POUVOIR GRANDIR

*L'Union des producteurs agricoles*

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Resolutions adopted at the 2017 UPA General Congress



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# Union Fundamentals



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*L'Union des producteurs agricoles*

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2017 General Congress



## THE UNION'S GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

### Fundamental values

The Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) is a professional farm union organization. Its main purpose and style of action are based on the fundamental values of respect for the individual, solidarity, collective action, social justice, equity and democracy.

### Mission

The UPA's primary mission, keeping these values in mind, is to promote, defend and develop the professional, economic, social and moral interests of Quebec agricultural and forestry producers, without distinction as to race, nationality, gender, language or beliefs.

Moreover, since the UPA interacts regularly with all Quebec society, it contributes to improving the social, economic and cultural life of rural communities.

Lastly, the UPA recognizes that Quebec agriculture and forestry is evolving in a context of world interactions and, consequently, it may align itself with collective action by agricultural and forestry producer groups both in other Canadian provinces and in other countries.

### Fundamental principles

To translate its mission into concrete and committed actions, the Union abides by certain principles that have been defined over the years and that still serve to guide decisions on the future development of the agricultural and forestry sectors.

The guiding principles on which we base our actions are:

- The Union brings together and represents all Quebec agricultural and forestry producers, without regard to the size or structure of their farm, the type of commodity they produce, or their place of residence.
- To guarantee its independence, the UPA's operations are funded exclusively by all agricultural producers, through standard dues, as well as a check-off based on the quantity of farm and forestry production marketed.
- The members control the union, in particular, through democratic ways of operating, a dynamic union life, and its funding method.
- When setting priorities or developing services, collective interests must always prevail over individual or sectorial interests.
- Collective action, lobbying activities, a steady presence in the public mind and partnership alliances are the Union's primary means of supporting its strategic directions.
- By the stances it takes and its actions, the UPA promotes the preservation and development of family-owned, human-scale farms, essentially operated and managed by the family.

- Agricultural and forestry producers must earn a fair income based on their cost of production, first through a collective approach to marketing, then through various complementary mechanisms that may be necessary, given the cyclical and structural characteristics of these sectors.
- In order to be able to farm and to develop agriculture in Quebec, agricultural zones must be protected and priority must be given to farming activities in these zones.
- Protection of the environment and the development of sustainable farming practices are fundamental elements in ensuring the survival of agriculture and agricultural operations.
- Appropriate strategies must be devised to help aspiring young farmers have access to the farming profession and the farm union movement.
- Agricultural training and consulting services are essential to the development of agricultural operations and must be available to all agricultural producers in Quebec.
- The quality of farm life is an on-going concern, particularly through the prevention of accidents and occupational diseases.



# Union Activity and Business Environment

## Workshop 1



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Resolutions adopted at the 2017 UPA General Congress





## 1.1. SUPPORT FOR SMALL FARMS

**WHEREAS** the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) is a professional union organization that works to maintain and develop agriculture and forestry businesses all across Quebec;

**WHEREAS** data from the 2016 Census of Agriculture indicate that 40 percent of farms in Quebec have an annual gross farm income of \$50,000 or less;

**WHEREAS** the owners of these farm businesses face unique challenges with respect to marketing their products, income security, and financing;

**WHEREAS** these farmers need guidance and expertise to improve their production;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To assess which tools and services should be created or better adapted to support small farms, especially when it comes to marketing;
- To make the required representations to all levels of government (federal, provincial, and municipal), particularly the Financière agricole du Québec and Farm Credit Canada, so that they:
  - Enhance and promote their new start-up and development assistance programs for small businesses;
  - Increase the level of risk associated with funding start-up and establishment projects for young farmers;
  - Amend the regulations to ensure they reflect the realities of small farms.

## 1.2. MITIGATING THE IMPACTS OF A MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government, following the example of other provinces, is considering a potential increase in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour;

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government has committed to gradually increasing the minimum wage from \$10.75 per hour in 2016 to \$12.45 per hour in 2020;

**WHEREAS** wages account for a high percentage of total expenses in horticultural businesses (i.e., between 33 and 54 percent of operating expenses);

**WHEREAS** there is limited capacity for mechanization in horticultural sectors and a number of tasks must be done manually;

**WHEREAS** in horticultural sectors, local products face strong competition from imported products, especially those from countries in Latin America and Asia, where the minimum wage is significantly lower;

**WHEREAS** in an environment where competition is becoming unsustainable, there is a risk that horticultural businesses will relocate;

**WHEREAS** a recent study conducted by the firm Forest Lavoie Conseil indicated that a minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour would have a major impact on the competitiveness of farm businesses, especially those in the horticultural sector;

**WHEREAS** the ability to pass higher costs on to the market is very low in agriculture and forestry;

**WHEREAS** a minimum wage increase will have a negative impact on the production costs, viability, and profitability of agricultural and forestry businesses;

**WHEREAS** an increase in employee wages would lead to increased mechanization in certain sectors, and therefore to fewer jobs and devitalization of rural communities;

**WHEREAS** data from the Institut de la statistique du Québec and a study from the Institut de recherche en économie contemporaine entitled *L'agriculture et la foresterie dans l'Est-du-Québec – matériaux pour préparer l'avenir* (agriculture and forestry in eastern Quebec – materials to prepare for the future) demonstrate that the vitality index is high in municipalities where agriculture and forestry thrive;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To make all necessary representations to ensure, in the event of a significant increase in the minimum wage in Quebec, that:

- The government works with industry representatives to find viable solutions for agricultural businesses;
- The government maintains the status quo if no solution is put forward or no equivalent government compensation is allocated;
- The political parties commit to proposing viable solutions for the agriculture and forestry industries and to implement them after the next election campaign;
- To obtain the support of rural municipalities in this matter;

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To develop a long-term minimum wage policy specifically for the horticulture sector that is based on inflation and includes compensation mechanisms.

### 1.3. IMPACT OF QUEBEC REGULATIONS ON FARM COMPETITIVENESS

**WHEREAS** Quebec regulations are generally more demanding than those that apply to most of our competitors, especially when it comes to the environment, traceability, biosecurity, food safety, audits, traffic, and the pricing of carbon, electricity, and water;

**WHEREAS** these regulations increase operating costs for Quebec farmers, compromising their competitiveness relative to producers in other provinces and states;

**WHEREAS** Quebec producers operate in the same economic environment as producers in other Canadian provinces;

**WHEREAS** there are particular administrative requirements and timelines required for the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) to process demands;

**WHEREAS** analyses of regulatory impacts on target clientele must be conducted for all standards of a regulatory or administrative nature under the government policy on regulatory and administrative streamlining;

**WHEREAS** this government policy applies across the board given that all departments and organizations are subject to it;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To commission and fund a study by an independent firm, in compliance with the government policy on regulatory and administrative streamlining, to assess the economic impact of Quebec's regulatory requirements on production costs and their effects on the competitiveness of Quebec agricultural businesses;
- To ensure that at the end of the study representations are made with a view to re-establishing fairness.

## 1.4. MONETARY ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES

**WHEREAS** the amounts for monetary administrative penalties are established under the *Environment Quality Act*;

**WHEREAS** these amounts were determined based on how compliance failures are categorized and on whether one is a natural or legal person;

**WHEREAS** the amount for a legal person is four or five times higher than that for a natural person;

**WHEREAS** in these conditions, an incorporated farm or general partnership is penalized the same as a multinational corporation for an offence deemed to be in the same category;

**WHEREAS** many businesses in the agriculture industry fail to generate income greater than the average employee salary;

**WHEREAS** pricing adapted to the agricultural industry is required in this context;

**WHEREAS** the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MDDELCC) would obtain better results if it required its employees to act in a guiding role rather than a coercive role, without providing notice or information;

**WHEREAS** the agricultural community is doubly punished given that monetary administrative penalties disqualify businesses from accessing certain programs;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The MDDELCC**

- To revise the amounts for monetary administrative penalties so that agricultural operations constituted as legal persons (companies) or general partnerships are treated as natural persons;
- To favour a guidance-oriented approach when dealing with farmers rather than adhering to a primarily coercive approach;
- To create a committee to develop legislation that is better adapted to the agricultural sector;

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To inform producers of their options for contesting monetary administrative penalties.

## 1.5. YOUTH STRATEGY

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government is continuing with its consultations to develop a bio-food policy to be unveiled in spring 2018;

**WHEREAS**, according to the Quebec government, “the future policy will guide the development of a prosperous bio-food industry”;

**WHEREAS** Quebec agriculture generates regional vitality and a variety of economic activities, in which young farmers play an essential role;

**WHEREAS** the new bio-food policy must give priority to the establishment of the next generation of farmers across Quebec;

**WHEREAS** there is no official or interdepartmental structure that provides a space to discuss the status of the next generation of farmers;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To use the *Document synthèse préliminaire en vue de la rédaction d’une stratégie jeunesse* (preliminary summary document for preparation of a youth strategy) as inspiration in developing its new bio-food policy, a document that the Fédération de la relève agricole du Québec (FRAQ) produced and submitted to the MAPAQ and that sets out the main needs of Quebec’s young farmers in five priority areas, namely:
  1. Facilitating access to capital;
  2. Encouraging farm transfers and start-ups;
  3. Making the MAPAQ the expert in agricultural entrepreneurship coaching;
  4. Supporting youth organizations that work in agriculture;
  5. Providing consistent agricultural training across Quebec;
- To create a standing committee on young farmers that will include government departments and key organizations working on this issue, and to task it with working on the five priority areas determined by the FRAQ;
- To hire the individuals needed to implement the policy.

## **1.6. NEW FEDERAL TAX MEASURES FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES**

**WHEREAS** the federal government announced new tax measures for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on July 18, 2017;

**WHEREAS** these new measures provide for, among other things, income splitting for related individuals, limits on the increasing requests for capital gains relief, the option to declare capital gains to tax accumulated appreciation, the accumulation of investment in companies through private shares, and the conversion of income into capital gains;

**WHEREAS** these changes will apply to all SMEs, regardless of economic sector;

**WHEREAS** the magnitude of these measures and their complexity seem to indicate a lack of understanding on the government's part when it comes to the realities of the agricultural sector, which differs significantly from the other sectors;

**WHEREAS** these measures are generating uncertainty and insecurity among farmers regarding the feasibility of transferring their businesses and the manner in which their family members participate in these businesses;

**WHEREAS** a public consultation on this topic took place, which ended on October 2, 2017;

**WHEREAS** the federal government stated its intention to table a new version of the measures affecting SMEs before 2018;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### **➤ The federal government**

- To exempt agricultural businesses from the new tax measures;

#### **➤ The UPA**

- To inform producers about the issues related to these new tax measures.

## **1.7. ACCESS TO QUALITY CELLULAR TELEPHONE AND HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICE**

**WHEREAS** more and more agricultural and forestry producers are using smartphones to monitor equipment, the well-being of their herds, and weather conditions;

**WHEREAS** using a cellular telephone also provides a degree of safety to agricultural and forestry producers, who often work alone and isolated in fields, forests, or livestock buildings;

**WHEREAS** cellular telephone service is not accessible in all parts of Quebec;

**WHEREAS** producers are required to send a certain amount of information about their businesses via the Internet;

**WHEREAS** the quality of the current networks is limited in many areas;

**WHEREAS** high-speed Internet service is often either not accessible or offered by only one provider at comparatively high rates;

**WHEREAS** governments themselves require that data be provided online and that information or forms be obtained on their websites;

**WHEREAS** this situation is resulting in supplementary costs for certain businesses located in sparsely populated municipalities;

**WHEREAS** this situation is unacceptable in the year 2017;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The governments of Canada and Quebec**

- To ensure that all of Quebec has access to cellular telephone service and reliable, quality, and secure Internet networks;
- To ensure that quality, high-speed Internet services are offered to all agricultural and forestry producers by more than one provider at competitive prices;

#### ➤ **The Fédération québécoise des municipalités, the Union des municipalités du Québec, and regional county municipalities**

- To support the UPA in its requests to governments on this issue;
- To take a proactive approach to this issue;
- To approach service providers regarding this issue.

## 1.8. ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

**WHEREAS** road safety in our municipalities is everyone's business;

**WHEREAS** agricultural machinery and trailers that are used on the road network are often larger and slower than other vehicles;

**WHEREAS** agricultural vehicles are more likely to be present on roadways at certain times of year, specifically in spring and fall;

**WHEREAS** other road users often have a poor understanding of the realities of agricultural communities, which leads to frustration, impatience, and behaviours that can cause accidents;

**WHEREAS** the *Regulation respecting the visibility and traffic of farm machines wider than 2.6 metres* has improved safety for all road users;

**WHEREAS** initiatives have been started in certain regions to warn road users about the presence of agricultural vehicles;

**WHEREAS** the standardized and uniform use of signage across Quebec would improve its recognition by road users on the entire road network;

**WHEREAS** signage must be improved in certain regions according to the characteristics of the road network;

**WHEREAS** future drivers should be informed about the presence of agricultural vehicles in rural communities;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

- **The Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) and the Ministère des Transports, de la Mobilité durable et de l'Électrification des transports (MTMDET)**
  - To develop and disseminate, through a variety of media, a province-wide awareness campaign on road safety in agricultural communities that is intended for all road users, including cyclists;
  - To develop and make available a standardized sign announcing the probable presence of agricultural vehicles on the road;
  - To identify road areas where special, permanent, or seasonal signage is needed, depending on their characteristics;
  - To provide an incentive for driving schools to include information on how to behave around farm vehicles in their training materials (what the orange triangle means, how to pass, etc.);

➤ **The UPA**

- To work with the SAAQ and the MTMDET to develop an awareness campaign to teach people about road safety in rural communities;
- To conduct an awareness campaign for farmers by distributing posters, organizing prevention networks, and publishing information articles on how to drive farm machinery safely.

## 1.9. PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**WHEREAS** farmer mental health represents a major concern for the UPA;

**WHEREAS** the latest statistics on suicide in agriculture, published by Health Canada, are thirty years old (1971–1987);

**WHEREAS** we have no current data on the state of psychological distress among Quebec farmers or on the suicide rate in the industry;

**WHEREAS** a study by Ginette Lafleur published in 2006 demonstrated that over half of Quebec’s farmers (50.9 percent) experienced high levels of psychological distress, which is more than twice the rate of the Quebec population as a whole (20.1 percent);

**WHEREAS** new ways to survey farmers now exist;

**WHEREAS** a number of stressors contribute to the increased psychological distress experienced by farmers and the government has the power to influence a number of these stressors;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To list, use, and promote the existing tools in the mental health field;
- To ensure that the public service offering is consistent with needs, specifically that the budget recently announced by Minister Barrette is sufficient;
- To continue working with the Ordre des psychologues du Québec, the Ordre des travailleurs sociaux et des thérapeutes conjugaux et familiaux du Québec and other related orders and organizations to spread the word about the problem unique to the agricultural sector, and to solicit their support in enhancing the offer of professional services for farmers and their families;
- To continue seeking funding to hire “road workers”;
- To make the necessary representations to the government to develop the tools to monitor farmers’ mental health status;
- To work with existing organizations and support them in keeping up-to-date statistics and adjusting their activities based on the data;

#### ➤ **The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS)**

- To make the Institut national de santé publique du Québec responsible for monitoring changes in suicide rates by profession;
- To improve the offering of psychosocial services in the health network and to fund the hiring of “road workers”;

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To ensure, through its programs and support for the agricultural sector, that a stable, predictable, and development-friendly business environment is maintained.

## 1.10. TOWARDS CARBON NEUTRALITY IN OUR ORGANIZATION

**WHEREAS** individually, Quebec farmers are expending considerable effort in their sustainable development activities;

**WHEREAS** the UPA takes positions supporting sustainable development in agriculture and forestry;

**WHEREAS** UPA Développement international (UPA DI), which is owned by the UPA, works in the world's least developed countries alongside farm organizations that support members in their territories to achieve sustainable development in agriculture and forestry;

**WHEREAS** the issues related to sustainable development are tightly linked to those related to climate change;

**WHEREAS** there is no longer any scientific doubt regarding humanity's contribution to climate change;

**WHEREAS** climate change is having a real impact on agriculture and world food security, and every local action taken is part of the global solution;

**WHEREAS** Quebec is part of the first group in North America to have created a carbon market;

**WHEREAS** there is desire on the part of the UPA and its close relative, UPA DI, to be part of the solution;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To develop an action plan to make our organization carbon neutral by 2023;
- To explore the possibility of using our collective tools to collect and sell carbon credits from agriculture and forestry;
- To take advantage of the experience of our partners in the agriculture and forestry sectors, such as La Coop fédérée;
- To present the outcomes of the achievements in this area at the next General Congress.





# Income Security and Trade

## Workshop 2



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Resolutions adopted at the 2017 UPA General Congress





## 2.1. CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP: A CLEAR RESPONSE TO EXPRESSED RISK MANAGEMENT NEEDS

**WHEREAS** the sustainability of Canadian agricultural businesses and the growth of the industry depend on an environment that is conducive to development, which in turn depends on the establishment of solid business risk management (BRM) programs;

**WHEREAS** the agricultural sector was not listened to adequately during the consultations that took place before the federal, provincial, and territorial governments adopted the agreement in principle on the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) framework agreement in July 2017;

**WHEREAS** the changes made to current BRM programs contained in this framework agreement do not address the needs expressed by Canadian farmers during the consultations;

**WHEREAS** few farmers were able to participate in the consultations;

**WHEREAS** the federal government is opposed to increasing BRM budgets, in spite of the increased risk and uncertainty generated by the coming into force of the Canada–European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the highly uncertain future of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the reopening of discussions on an 11-country Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP);

**WHEREAS** the countries with which Canada competes in world markets provide significant support to their agriculture industries;

**WHEREAS** the agriculture sector now operates in a context that is different from the one that prevailed when the BRM programs were created nearly 10 years ago, and the renewal of these programs, without in-depth reflection on the needs of agricultural businesses, is not a sign that the industry is able to plan for the future;

**WHEREAS** the implementation of strategic BRM programs requires consideration of the risks facing farmers, the investments required, the industry’s capacity for growth, and the associated spinoffs;

**WHEREAS** Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has been worryingly slow to implement its comprehensive program review, which was announced at the same time as the framework agreement and included plans to create a consulting group made up of experts and farmers, as well as a consultation;

**WHEREAS** this comprehensive program review process must be completed by July 2018;

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

### **➤ AAFC**

- To show genuine openness to enhancing the farm income safety net, which involves, among other things:
  - The prompt creation of an advisory group that includes representatives appointed by farmers' organizations;
  - The allocation of resources needed for the advisory group to accomplish its work and for the consultation to take place as part of the comprehensive program review;
  - That the consultation be held at a time that is conducive to farmer participation;
- To increase the budget allocated to BRM under the CAP, in order to adequately address Canadian farmers' needs;
- To stabilize farm income, both for specific events and in extended periods of low prices, through a program whose payments are based on the true production costs in different sectors and on each province's specific situation;
- To recognize programs that treat investment and risk-self management as powerful levers to improve BRM;

### **➤ The Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ)**

- To support farmers' and industry stakeholders' organizations in their demands for a better safety net and adequate funding;
- To actively collaborate and participate in the comprehensive program review so that these demands can be realized;
- To respond to the demands formulated by Quebec farmers during this review and, if necessary, adapt current programs accordingly;
- To increase funding for BRM programs and ensure their coverage is at least equivalent to that available under current programs.

## **2.2. SUPPORTING THE GROWTH OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR TO GENERATE MORE SPINOFFS**

**WHEREAS** the creation of a predictable environment allowing all types of agricultural businesses to develop involves, among other things, adequate government support, which provides the leverage needed to stimulate improvements in efficiency, profitability, and competitiveness through farm income stabilization;

**WHEREAS** income security programs are essential not only for ensuring competitiveness in the market relative to competitors who receive greater support, but also for generating the stability needed to make strategic investments when it comes to productivity, environment, societal expectations, and adaptation to climate change;

**WHEREAS** the current programs offer limited protection in a number of situations, especially long periods of low prices, market collapse, and changes in the regulatory environment for agriculture;

**WHEREAS** current risk self-management programs, AgriInvest and Agri-Québec, are being consolidated with farm income stabilization programs;

**WHEREAS** the government has still not responded to the solutions proposed in December 2014 by the Quebec farm income security working group, even though these proposals were intended to improve the coverage of available programs and implement new programs that address the reality of agriculture today;

**WHEREAS** programs such as the Stratégie de soutien à l'adaptation des entreprises agricoles (farm business adaptation support strategy) have enabled a number of businesses to become more efficient, generating positive outcomes for the agriculture industry, for the Quebec economy, and for the government;

**WHEREAS** diversity in business type and size, production cycles, and farm product marketing methods must be recognized and taken into consideration in such programs;

**WHEREAS** the \$95 million in investment announced by the MAPAQ in November 2017 represents a step in the right direction, but is far from meeting all needs in the farm sector;

**WHEREAS** no government assistance for the crop sector was included in the investments announced in November 2017, and the sector has needs with respect to addressing societal expectations and adapting to climate change;

**WHEREAS** there are surplus funds for corn and soy farms from the Farm Income Stabilization Insurance (ASRA) program equivalent to the government contribution portion, following the withdrawal of these sectors from the program;

**WHEREAS** the different risk management programs administered by the Financière agricole du Québec (FADQ) are complex;

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To give the MAPAQ a budget that addresses the needs expressed by the agriculture industry;
- To authorize the implementation of the Quebec farm income security working group's proposals, starting by increasing the FADQ's budget flexibility from \$1 million to \$5 million in order to enhance programs and create new ones ratified by its board of directors;

### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To create a solid development support program with two components (firstly regional assistance and secondly development, transition, or industry projects) that is in place long enough to avoid administrative backlogs;
- To enhance current programs and to create new programs to further support production sectors that must address societal imperatives, such as animal-welfare and agri-environmental requirements;
- To establish an investment plan for the crop sector, including \$38 million for the grain sector from the surplus ASRA funds for corn and soy;
- To establish an investment plan for the maple syrup industry in order to respond to the new California standard;
- To act quickly in extreme climatic events, which starts with recognizing the long-term effects of such events and by ensuring the AgriRecovery framework is used proactively;
- To support industry organizations in the development and dissemination of reliable economic information, starting with production cost studies, both to establish income security programs that provide adequate assistance and to support the development of management tools;

### ➤ **The FADQ**

- To no longer consolidate the assistance given through the AgriInvest and Agri-Québec programs with farm income stabilization insurance;
- To enhance the Agri-Québec and Agri-Québec Plus programs;
- To act quickly during extreme events (e.g., price drops, animal diseases);
- To maintain and enhance existing income security programs (e.g., ASRA);
- To increase the contribution rate to the Agri-Québec program in order to account for farm size and the unique features of the various industries, regions, and businesses, with the objective of stimulating agricultural growth to meet consumer needs;
- To initiate an information campaign to familiarize farmers with the terms of risk management programs.

## 2.3. ADAPT FARM INCOME STABILIZATION INSURANCE TO THE CURRENT PRODUCTION CONTEXT

**WHEREAS** the ASRA program is highly strategic for Quebec agriculture, with both economic and social spinoffs, and the vitality of rural communities depends on the presence of sustainable agricultural businesses;

**WHEREAS** Quebec agriculture has changed greatly over the last decade and these changes are accelerating, requiring major investments in animal welfare, agri-environment, market development, and adaptation to climate change;

**WHEREAS** it would be best to optimize the ASRA program in order offer strategic support in this changing context;

**WHEREAS** those operating in sectors covered by ASRA want to realize their full growth potential, which is estimated at an additional \$645 million in agricultural receipts by 2025;

**WHEREAS** consensus has been reached, both within the Quebec farm income security working group and on the FADQ board of directors, that the ASRA program should be enhanced;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The FADQ**

- To quickly replace the current index such that farmer remuneration is instead indexed according to the wage progression for the group of occupations used to generate the reference for farmer remuneration;
- To update the ceiling, currently set at three times the reference farm, for contributions shared between farmers and the government;
- To undertake steps, in collaboration with the UPA and the relevant sectors, to:
  - Update the remuneration for the farmer's work to account for the new industry realities and the time spent on management;
  - To create a protection mechanism to compensate for a potential increase in the price of grain and other products in the relevant production sector;
  - To limit consolidation of the amounts paid under ASRA with compensation from AgriStability in the event of epizootic diseases or drops in income associated with production types related to those insured under ASRA, specifically sheep's milk and lamb production;
  - To place a three-year limit on consolidating payments already issued through AgriInvest and Agri-Québec for insured production types;
  - To index allowances that are currently fixed for the duration of the model;

➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To make the necessary representations to the Quebec government to obtain rapid authorization for the previously requested changes to ASRA, specifically the request to include research and promotional contributions paid for by farmers in the stabilized income calculation;
- To give the FADQ a clear mandate to complete the requested ASRA-related work and to examine the recommendations that come out of it.

## 2.4. IMPROVING THE CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM

**WHEREAS** it is important for farmers to have access to crop insurance coverage that is adapted to the current needs of their businesses;

**WHEREAS** the insured values have reached the ceiling in each of the last five years, despite increases in both produced values and risk;

**WHEREAS** climate change is resulting in more frequent extreme weather events and larger catastrophes, in addition to increasing the level of risk to crops;

**WHEREAS** yield losses caused by such extreme weather events and catastrophes are not adequately covered by the suite of programs offered by the FADQ;

**WHEREAS** farmers doubt the capacity of income security programs to react effectively in a context of more frequent and more damaging events, and this capacity must be promptly evaluated to limit the accumulation of multiple impacts on affected businesses;

**WHEREAS** a number of elements in the crop insurance program currently need to be updated, starting with the reference yields that are lower than actual yields and that fail to reflect technological innovations, in addition to unit prices or replacement values that are affected by variability in income per hectare in certain industries;

**WHEREAS** according to the 2016–2017 FADQ annual report, complaints filed with the FADQ are most often associated with the crop insurance program, and insured farmers' level of satisfaction with the protection offered is 63 percent;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **AAFC**

- To include modernization of crop insurance in its comprehensive BRM program review, specifically pertaining to climate change and technological developments;

#### ➤ **The FADQ**

- To take faster action to modernize crop insurance, in collaboration with the UPA and the relevant specialized affiliate groups, in order to adequately meet farmers' individual and collective needs, specifically by adding the following elements to the work currently in progress:
  - Updating a number of insurance parameters, specifically the method used to establish probable yields and the unit prices used;
  - Assessing losses not covered in the event of extreme weather events and creating mechanisms to improve consideration of their impacts on crop yields and compensation paid through the program;

- Introducing an updating process for probable yield calculations in cases where a major technological shift is likely to significantly improve a business's yield;
- Developing new protection mechanisms for agricultural production types that are not currently insurable;
- Ensuring greater individual flexibility in the insured value per hectare, especially for diversified market gardeners;
- To respond proactively to extreme weather events and to catastrophes by systematically implementing a monitoring committee immediately after such events to coordinate actions, encourage efficient information sharing, and unite partners, including AAFC, the MAPAQ, the affected UPA Federation, the specialized groups, and all other relevant departments and organizations.

## 2.5. COLLECTIVE CROP INSURANCE PROTECTION FOR HAY

**WHEREAS** there has been a 27-percent reduction in the number of businesses insured for hay production and a 23 percent decrease in the number of units insured between 2010 and 2017 as a result of, among other things, farmers' dissatisfaction with the coverage offered;

**WHEREAS** the FADQ has been using a new method to assess losses since 2016, and it now offers a certain level of personalization in its protection;

**WHEREAS** tools have been developed to trace the links between observable climatic variables (e.g. winter freezing, drought, excess rain) and the hay yield loss rate;

**WHEREAS** a number of questions remain as to how the new loss assessment method is applied, which is generating uncertainty regarding the potential compensation;

**WHEREAS** the modernization of the weather station network is resulting in fewer stations and in changes to their geographic location;

**WHEREAS** in times of drought covering an extensive area, hay shortages can cause upticks in local hay prices and transportation costs, and these two elements are not adequately captured by the province-wide hay replacement cost assessment conducted by the FADQ;

**WHEREAS** the forage growth period remains the same regardless of how many cuts the producer decides to do, whereas the precipitation data are considered for a 60-day period in the two-cut option and a 45-day period in the three-cut option;

**WHEREAS** shortening the second-cut period in the two-cut option would account for agronomic effects and provide a more realistic picture with respect to observed yields;

**WHEREAS** compensation through crop insurance does not account for the significantly higher costs and prices associated with certified organic forage crops;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The FADQ**

- To promptly revise the method used to establish the replacement value for hay so as to account for actual replacement cost, production cost, and price variation in the event of regional shortages, while taking organic operations into account by increasing the replacement value by 50 percent given that this is reflective of the reality experienced by farmers;
- To annually collect the actual yields reported by farmers on a voluntary basis in order to validate the loss estimates established using data collected from weather stations, where necessary;

- To increase the number of weather stations in zones that are recognized as being problematic, including zones that contain microclimates;
- To more effectively take into account the impacts of extreme weather events on yield losses for hay and pasture;
- To take the steps needed to calculate damages as precisely as possible, whether through field visits or the use of new technologies;
- To offer more coverage options to make compensation more consistent with the actual needs of businesses, especially organic businesses;
- To address the issues raised concerning crop insurance program modernization in the course of this work on collective protection for hay;
- To apply the enhancements that can be made for the 2017 crop year quickly, giving priority firstly to assessing yield and establishing the replacement value of hay and secondly to reducing the second-cut period to 45 days instead of 60 days in order to take precipitation into account.

## **2.6. BOLDNESS AND LISTENING ON THE PART OF THE MAPAQ AND THE FADQ IN ACCOMPLISHING THEIR RESPECTIVE MISSIONS**

**WHEREAS** the mission of the MAPAQ is to influence and support the success of the Quebec bio-food industry, while that of the FADQ is to sustain and promote the development of the agriculture and food sector, both with a view to sustainable development;

**WHEREAS** the accomplishment of these missions depends on relationships of trust with Quebec farmers and on the provision of services adapted to their reality;

**WHEREAS** delays in file processing and complexity in administrative processes are impeding the development of the agriculture sector, sometimes to the point where projects are declined because MAPAQ programs have expired during the process;

**WHEREAS** the FADQ is responsible for modernizing its offer of agricultural risk management programs so that they support farmers, both in adapting to climate change and in improving the business environment in which they operate;

**WHEREAS** the FADQ needs to fully take on its role in supporting agriculture and agri-food development, especially by assuming a part of the increased risk in investment projects and processing all requests within a reasonable time;

**WHEREAS** the participation rate in certain programs and crop insurance protection tools is low, which may partly be explained by farmers' lack of satisfaction with the FADQ;

**WHEREAS** farmers should have the right to a second expert opinion in matters pertaining to crop insurance in cases where they observe that erroneous field data have been gathered;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### **➤ The MAPAQ and the FADQ**

- To conduct an objective evaluation of the administration and functioning of their programs and to modify them to respond more appropriately to farmers' needs, especially those of young farmers;
- To establish eligibility criteria that will enable more farmers to qualify for programs;
- To give themselves the means to meet farmers' needs, which starts with solving the problems associated with file analysis, processing times, and the complexity of administrative processes;

➤ **The FADQ**

- To be bolder and take more risks when it comes to funding and developing income security programs, in order to better meet farmers' needs including those associated with new farmers' projects;
- Adapt programs to businesses in the transfer or start-up phase, to small businesses, to businesses operating in organic regimes, and to businesses with diverse production types;
- To improve its outreach strategy so that the different programs are better known, both in French and in English, and to ensure that farmers are able to make informed decisions by providing them, among other things, with tools to help them predict the level of compensation they may receive on the basis of the insured risks;
- To aim for a higher level of satisfaction with programs and to measure this level using independent surveys of farmers;
- To allow farmers to obtain a second expert opinion in cases where they deem that the wrong decision has been made on their file or observe that erroneous data have been gathered.

## 2.7. NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

**WHEREAS** the United States has begun renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with a series of demands that are intended, on the one hand, to protect American interests and, on the other, to abolish the Canadian systems that operate under supply management;

**WHEREAS** Canada must take a balanced position in trade negotiations with the United States, i.e., one in which the integrity of systems under supply management is maintained while access to American markets for export-oriented products is ensured;

**WHEREAS** such a renegotiation poses a serious risk considering the desire of those in the American dairy industry to gain more Canadian market access for dairy products, even to the point of abolishing supply management;

**WHEREAS** the current terms of NAFTA allow supply management to be maintained in the egg, poultry, and dairy industries and exclude the Canadian dairy sector from all agricultural market concessions governed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) supplementary to those provided for under NAFTA;

**WHEREAS** despite this exclusion, since NAFTA came into effect in 1994, dairy imports from the United States into Canada have gone from approximately 24,000 tonnes, with a value of \$50 million, to over 177,000 tonnes, with a value of \$500 million, representing three quarters of all dairy imports, and the situation is comparable in the poultry and egg sectors;

**WHEREAS** the inclusion of supply management in the negotiations opens the door to new market concessions and would lead to further losses of income and jobs in addition to those already seen in the dairy industry following the adoption of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union, and that in addition, despite the withdrawal of the United States from the TPP in January 2017, the other signatory countries to this agreement, including Canada, are continuing discussions to quickly reach a new agreement;

**WHEREAS** all countries have agricultural policies and sensitive sectors to preserve in their trade relations;

**WHEREAS** supply management is a legitimate agricultural model that allows farmers to make a fair market income, which has positive spinoffs for the whole of society in terms of the social realm, food security, and the economy;

**WHEREAS** the federal government has repeated its support for supply management on multiple occasions;

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government has reiterated the importance of maintaining supply management in the NAFTA renegotiations;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

➤ **The Government of Canada**

- To exclude supply management from all current and future NAFTA negotiations in order to ensure supply management is preserved in its entirety, and to prevent all further market access concessions and tariff reductions;
- To maintain access to American markets and to eliminate all trade impediments for export-oriented agri-food products;

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To actively participate in discussions, to make every possible effort to fully maintain supply management, and to develop agriculture-industry alliances with other provinces to ensure the federal government protects supply management;

➤ **The UPA and national organizations governing products under supply management**

- To take all actions necessary, in concert with all of their partners, to ensure that the federal government protects supply management.

## **2.8. EXEMPTION FOR WOOD FROM PRIVATE FORESTS IN THE FUTURE AGREEMENT ON LUMBER EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES**

**WHEREAS** the dispute over lumber ended in the application of taxes and quotas on Canadian lumber;

**WHEREAS** the Canadian government could negotiate special exemptions in a future agreement on softwood lumber exports to the United States;

**WHEREAS** government management of a high proportion of Canadian forests has historically been an irritant in trade relations between Canada and the United States, unlike the management of forests under private tenure;

**WHEREAS** the objectives and management decisions of Canadian forest owners are similar to those of American owners;

**WHEREAS** the price of logs from private forests on the Canadian market is comparable to the price of logs on the American market;

**WHEREAS** the supply of wood from private forests is limited and could only partially replace wood from public forests in supplying sawmills;

**WHEREAS** forest management subsidies are intended to pay for the marginal cost associated with societal demands regarding forest regeneration and reduced harvesting to mitigate the impact on landscapes, not to fund clearcutting;

**WHEREAS** the decision to harvest wood in private forests is protected from government decision making given that it is entirely up to the forest owner;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### **➤ The Government of Canada**

- To negotiate an exemption for wood from private forests in the future agreement on softwood lumber exports to the United States.

## **2.9. COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT: COMPENSATION FOR MARKET LOSSES IN THE DAIRY INDUSTRY**

**WHEREAS** the Canadian and European governments have reached the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), through which additional access to the Canadian market for dairy products have been conceded to Europe;

**WHEREAS** these concessions will result in recurring losses for Canadian dairy farmers on the order of \$140 million per year;

**WHEREAS** the Canadian government clearly recognized, in October 2015, the need to compensate for these losses for a 15-year period by announcing a series of measures specifically intended to compensate all cow's milk producers based on the quota they own, and at the time, \$4.3 billion had been allocated to dairy farmers and processors to compensate them for their losses resulting from the coming into force of CETA and the TPP;

**WHEREAS** no further action was ultimately taken on this announcement, and the Canadian government instead decided to announce the creation of a Dairy Farm Investment Program in November 2016 (hereafter called the "Program"), which is a transition and investment and support program on the order of \$250 million spread out over five years;

**WHEREAS** following this announcement, the Producteurs de lait du Québec stated that the program was insufficient because it lacked both the scale and the conditions to reach and support all farmers wishing to make investments through it;

**WHEREAS** AAFC announced the details of the Program on August 1, 2017, indicating that it would accept applications from farmers for the first phase starting on August 22, 2017;

**WHEREAS** on August 29, 2017, barely one week after it began receiving applications, AAFC stated that it would no longer be accepting them on the grounds that a large number of proposals had already been received and that their value exceeded the funds available for the first three years of the Program;

**WHEREAS** the large number of applications received from farmers demonstrates that the need for investment is being felt even now;

**WHEREAS** the \$250 million represented a financial lever for investment on dairy farms;

**WHEREAS** on August 1, 2017, the federal government announced its decision to issue new tariff rate quotas for European cheeses that would be shared equally between manufacturers and retailers;

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government and the Quebec dairy industry unanimously criticized this decision on the grounds that it ran counter to the repeated collective requests from various industry actors that additional import quotas be issued to and managed by cheese makers affected by the new imports, so as to mitigate the impact on Canadian cheese makers and producers;

**WHEREAS** no program has been planned for goat and sheep milk producers and processors, despite the market losses they too will experience as a result of the increase in specialty cheese imports from the European Union;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

➤ **The Government of Canada and AAFC**

- To honour the federal government's commitments made in October 2015 and to create a compensation program to make up for recurring loss of revenue on the part of Canadian dairy farmers;
- To make available, in the near term, the full \$250 million from the current investment program and to provide additional funds to meet the needs of all farmers who submit proposals that meet the program objectives over the next five years;
- To act with greater transparency in the administration of the Program and in following up with farmers on the component that is already in place;
- To create an additional program to meet the specific needs of sheep and goat milk producers;

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To exercise its leadership with the federal government to ensure that the latter develops and implements all measures referred to in the present resolution;
- To create an investment program with sufficient funds that would improve upon the Canadian government's program to ensure that farmers are compensated adequately for concessions made under CETA.

## 2.10. STANDARDS, REGULATIONS, AND ACCESS TO THE CANADIAN MARKET FOR IMPORTED PRODUCTS

**WHEREAS** Canada is party to various trade agreements governed by international trade law;

**WHEREAS** because of this, a growing number of imported food products are joining Canadian-made food products on the market;

**WHEREAS** over the years, Quebec and Canada have instantiated various certification standards related to production methods; regulations concerning food safety, biosecurity, and animal welfare; environmental and workplace standards; and a traceability system;

**WHEREAS** all these rules and measures not only add to the workload for farmers who are subject to them, but also often involve increased production costs that are not remunerated by the market or reflected in the food distribution system;

**WHEREAS** many imported foods are produced in jurisdictions with standards that differ from Canadian ones, and this asymmetry confers a competitive advantage to imported products;

**WHEREAS** a concrete example of this situation is the unlimited and duty-free admission of beef and veal from the European Union since CETA partially came into effect on September 21, 2017;

**WHEREAS** veal production within the European Union involves the use of several veterinary drugs that are not authorized in Canada;

**WHEREAS** the use of these drugs helps reduce production costs of heavy veal calves, which includes the costs of drugs as well as mortality and morbidity rates;

**WHEREAS** Quebec produces and markets 80 percent of heavy veal calf meat in Canada;

**WHEREAS** beef and veal produced in Canada is subject to a certification protocol in order access the European Union market;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The Government of Canada and AAFC**

- To promptly create an investment support program to enable heavy veal calf farms to modernize in order to face the unfair competition resulting from CETA;
- To ensure that all legal and regulatory measures are put in place, along with the structures needed for monitoring and complying with Canadian standards, and to ensure the necessary resources are provided for these;

- To implement financial compensation program to ensure Quebec agricultural businesses remain competitive in cases where local standards are more stringent than those in other countries;
- To implement a certification protocol to ensure that veal from the European Union comes from a production system that complies with the same regulatory requirements that the Canadian heavy veal calf industry is required to follow, especially when it comes to the use of veterinary drugs;
- To create a Canada–European Union working group to harmonize regulations governing the use of veterinary drugs;

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To work in concert with the federal government to develop compensation programs to support Quebec farmers that operate under more stringent standards than those required for imported products;
- To actively support the initiatives of producer groups concerning CETA and to apply pressure to get the Canadian government to implement a certification protocol ensuring that veal from the European Union comes from production systems that follow the same regulatory requirements that the Canadian heavy veal calf industry is required to follow, especially when it comes to the use of veterinary drugs.

## 2.11. LEGISLATION GOVERNING ORGANIC PRODUCTS IN CANADA

**WHEREAS** the federal government has proposed to integrate the provisions in the current *Organic Products Regulations* (OPR) with its proposed Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR, part 14), published in the *Canada Gazette* on January 21, 2017;

**WHEREAS** certain sections of the current OPR have been amended by this proposal, specifically those requiring that businesses involved in storing and transporting organic products be certified;

**WHEREAS** no provisions exist within the Canadian organic standard that govern certification of these activities;

**WHEREAS** based on this same standard, the activities mentioned are considered subcontracted and are not subject to certification, since they do not alter the products and the level of risk to the integrity of the chain caused by these activities is extremely small;

**WHEREAS** the enforcement of these new requirements would generate considerable additional costs for agricultural and agri-food businesses;

**WHEREAS** such requirements do not apply to our trading partners, the United States and the European Union, and would put Canadian farmers at a disadvantage relative to their competitors;

**WHEREAS** only activities that carry a risk of noncompliance with organic standards should be subject to the obligation of holding a certificate guaranteeing the authenticity of an organic product;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The Government of Canada**

- To maintain a Canada-wide certification and verification system for organic products based on the certification of production mode and product processing that does not include product storage and transportation activities.

## 2.12. RESERVED DESIGNATIONS AND ADDED-VALUE CLAIMS

**WHEREAS** the Conseil des appellations réservées et des termes valorisants (CARTV) was created by the Quebec government in 2006 to enforce the *Act respecting reserved designations and added-value claims*, and has the mandate to oversee the use of recognized reserved designations, including the organic designation, and to guide business groups in developing designations for products that are distinguished by their origin or quality;

**WHEREAS** a number of reserved designations<sup>1</sup> have been recognized in the last five years, with a number of proposals pending;

**WHEREAS** the market for organic products is growing in Quebec and demand is being met by imported products;

**WHEREAS** the number of filed complaints and designation oversight activities at the CARTV is constantly increasing, including several cases of labelling errors for certified organic products from outside Quebec and fraudulent use of the term “organic”;

**WHEREAS** consumer confidence in reserved designations depends on the oversight, tracking, credibility, and control of these designations;

**WHEREAS** reserved designations represent a tool for developing regions and promoting the skilful preparation and authenticity of Quebec products with high added value;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To provide the CARTV with the resources it needs both to fully meet its role of monitoring the use of recognized reserved designations, ensuring the integrity of the relevant products with a view to earning consumer confidence, and guiding groups in the development of new reserved designations, while reducing wait times for applications to recognize new designations;
- To renew the Programme d’appui au développement des appellations réservées et des termes valorisants (support program for developing reserved designations and value-added claims) in order to effectively support businesses in implementing proposed designations and contributing to the development of specific sectors and regions.

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<sup>1</sup> Québec Icewine, protected geographical indication (2014), Québec Ice Cider, protected geographical indication (2014), Canadienne Cow Cheese, designation of specificity (2016), Neuville Sweet Corn, protected geographical indication (2017).





# Land Use and Environment

## Workshop 3



POUVOIR NOURRIR  
POUVOIR GRANDIR

*L'Union des producteurs agricoles*

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Resolutions adopted at the 2017 UPA General Congress





### 3.1. PRESSURE ON AGRICULTURAL LAND AND ACTIVITIES

**WHEREAS** Quebec's regime to protect agricultural land and activities is more relevant than ever due to pressure being put on agricultural land and activities;

**WHEREAS** the *Act respecting the preservation of agricultural land and agricultural activities* (LPTAA) is enforced by the Commission de protection du territoire agricole du Québec (CPTAQ) and the Commission's role must be strengthened;

**WHEREAS** municipalities support practically all non-agricultural land use proposals, yet do not evaluate these proposals using the criteria in section 62 of the LPTAA, and this situation draws needlessly on the CPTAQ's resources;

**WHEREAS** a number of non-agricultural uses (residential, commercial, and industrial) occur without authorization from the CPTAQ, and the sanction provided for in the LPTAA stipulating that lots must be restored to their former condition is never enforced;

**WHEREAS** there has been an increase in applications to use agricultural land for purposes other than agriculture in numerous forms and from numerous parties;

**WHEREAS** farmers face a multitude of municipal regulations that place excessive limits on the practice of agriculture as a result of coexistence problems, and their immunity from legal proceedings has been weakened by court decisions;

**WHEREAS** the government has, through decrees and through the *Act respecting the Réseau électrique métropolitain*, shrunk the CPTAQ's jurisdiction by granting itself the power to use lots in agricultural zones for purposes other than agriculture or forestry;

**WHEREAS** the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) has asked for every hectare of cropland lost to non-agricultural usage to be replaced with reclaimed land of comparable quality;

**WHEREAS** Bill 150, known as an Act respecting mainly the implementation of certain provisions of the Budget Speeches of 17 March 2016 and 28 March 2017, provides that the government can compensate for the loss of agricultural land in the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal (CMM) by including an area of farmland of equivalent quality;

**WHEREAS** government policy directions regarding land use and agricultural activities are currently being reviewed by the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire (MAMOT), with the collaboration of the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ), bodies which govern the municipalities in this domain;

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To not bow to pressure from municipalities to give them greater latitude when it comes to excluding farmland and implementing non-agricultural uses in green zones;
- To cease reducing the CPTAQ's jurisdiction through various legislative provisions that circumvent the objective of the LPTAA;
- To disallow financial compensation for farmland in requests to exclude CMM land from the agricultural zone under the principle of "prevent, minimize, compensate" and instead allow only the reclamation of a new area of equivalent quality;
- To strengthen the provisions in the LPTAA that give active farmers immunity, insofar as they farm the land and raise their herds in compliance with recognized practices, for example:
  - Adding to section 1 a definition of the term "nuisance" and adding to section 98 of the LPTAA the precedence of the LPTAA over the nuisance regulations associated with the *Municipal Powers Act*;
  - Strengthening the principle of immunity found in the LPTAA to apply to inconveniences resulting from heating (smoke) and lighting (luminosity);
  - Amending the applicable legislative tools to restrict municipalities' power to decree as nuisances legitimate agricultural activities that are in keeping with standards and best practices, and to include immunity in penal matters and adjustments in civil matters for such activities that are carried out in compliance with the rules;

### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To give the CPTAQ the necessary resources to fully play its role, especially when it comes to processing requests and complaints it receives and following up on its decisions within a three-month period, as was previously in effect, in order to ensure the sustainability of the agricultural zone and the development of the agricultural and forestry activities practiced there;

### ➤ **The MAMOT and the MAPAQ**

- To require, in future government policy directions on land use, compliance with land use tools adopted by municipalities (including land use and development plans and metropolitan land use and development plans), with the obligation to follow sound urbanization management practices, to require the use of available spaces within the urbanization perimeter, and to guarantee the protection of current farmland;
- To set targets in future government policy directions for densification within or expansion of urban perimeters, and to ensure that these targets allow for cost-effective infrastructure construction and maintenance in a manner that leaves farmland protected.

## 3.2. FARMLAND GRABBING AND FINANCIALIZATION

**WHEREAS** the acquisition of farmland by investment funds is contributing to the overbidding in land prices and the market value of farmland greatly exceeds its agricultural value;

**WHEREAS** there have been recent announcements of financial participation from the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ) and the Fonds de solidarité FTQ in the activities of the agricultural corporation Pangea;

**WHEREAS** land has been acquired by Pangea in a number of regional county municipalities (MRCs) in recent years and an upsurge in its activities was observed shortly after the announcement of these agricultural investments;

**WHEREAS** other investors and investment funds have expressed an interest in farmland;

**WHEREAS** the financialization of farmland poses a threat to the establishment of new farmers, to agricultural diversity, and to regional vitality and economies;

**WHEREAS** the UPA and several of its affiliates have taken a position and lodged complaints with the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries, Energy and Natural Resources in March 2015 proposing concrete solutions, including limiting the acquisition of land to 100 hectares per year, per person or entity, excluding intergenerational transfers;

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government has not yet taken an official position in this matter, despite all the representations that the UPA has made in recent years;

**WHEREAS** Fonds de solidarité FTQ shareholders receive a generous tax credit, which is justified by the mission of the Fonds, which is to contribute to economic growth in Quebec by creating, maintaining, and protecting jobs in Quebec;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To take action to mitigate farmland grabbing by investment corporations;
- To require the CDPQ to divest from Pangea and all similar investment funds;
- To apply pressure on the Fonds de solidarité FTQ to divest from Pangea given that participating in it runs counter to its mission;
- To keep a record of all farmland transactions in Quebec;
- To make the necessary arrangements to cap the area that any person or entity may acquire at 100 hectares per year, excluding intergenerational transfers, until such time as long-term solutions can be found;

- To increase support for new and existing farmers in order to revitalize rural areas and to respect their desire to be the owners of their businesses and be in charge of their own decisions;
- To create transfer conditions that are favourable to the transferors and to make patient capital available for agricultural start-up projects;

➤ **The CDPQ and the Fonds de solidarité FTQ**

- To invest directly in regional agriculture and forestry development funds;
- To increase their participation in the Fonds d'investissement pour la relève agricole and other funds to help the next generation of farmers get established;

➤ **The UPA**

- To speak out against the financial participation of the CDPQ and the Fonds de solidarité FTQ in the Pangea company.

### 3.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF FARMLAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

**WHEREAS** agriculture is one of the most important economic drivers in Quebec's regions and a study by ÉcoRessources demonstrated that there is a real growth potential of 30 percent over the next ten years;

**WHEREAS** agricultural zone development plans (PDZAs) have been instated in most MRCs;

**WHEREAS** a PDZA is an agricultural zone planning document whose purpose is to sustainably develop the full potential of an MRC's agricultural and forestry activities;

**WHEREAS** this plan must be carried out in collaboration with community actors that may collaborate with MRCs to accomplish certain actions;

**WHEREAS** human and financial resources must be allocated to the implementation of PDZAs;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To provide the municipal and agricultural communities with the financial means to help realize Quebec's full economic potential through the development of agricultural and forestry activities;

##### ➤ **The MAMOT**

- To specifically give MRCs the funds required, through the Fonds de développement des territoires and the Fonds d'appui au rayonnement des régions, to implement the actions that are identified in their PDZAs and validated by the agricultural sector;

##### ➤ **The MRCs**

- To allocate the appropriate human and financial resources to develop the full potential of agriculture and forestry and to ensure that PDZAs are implemented;
- To create PDZA monitoring committees in collaboration with the UPA's regional federations and local syndicates;
- To prepare and disseminate an annual report on PDZA-related accomplishments;

##### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To ensure that actions implemented through PDZAs are prioritized in collaboration with working partners such as the UPA.

### **3.4. MAINTAINING CULTIVABLE FARMLAND WITHIN WATERSHEDS DEEMED TO BE DEGRADED**

**WHEREAS** the *Agricultural Operations Regulation* (REA) has prohibited, since 2004, increases in farmland within watersheds that are deemed to be degraded, in which water quality exceeds 0.03 mg/litre of phosphorus;

**WHEREAS** since this prohibition took effect, large areas of farmland have been lost to non-agricultural land uses, especially urbanization;

**WHEREAS** the development of other sectors (including residential, commercial, and industrial) is not limited even though it also adds phosphorus to watercourses, and the urbanization of farmland degrades water quality;

**WHEREAS** the UPA has approached the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MDDELCC) numerous times with the goal of amending provisions in the REA prohibiting expansion of land under cultivation;

**WHEREAS** the government made a commitment, in 2014, to review these rules;

**WHEREAS** a MDDELCC-UPA technical committee created in 2015 concluded that amendments to the REA are needed in order to allow new land to be brought under cultivation to compensate for that lost to other uses;

**WHEREAS** municipal regulations prohibit the selective cutting and clearcutting of trees, and this may prevent the replacement of cultivable farmland, as authorized under the REA, or may prevent the reclamation of certain crops permitted under the REA;

**WHEREAS** increased population and food demand are expected to accompany the impacts of climate change, which are likely to compromise agricultural productivity worldwide;

**WHEREAS** there is a need to modify the REA to allow for increases in cultivable farmland in Quebec;

**WHEREAS** cooperation from the MAPAQ and the CPTAQ is needed to take stock of and account for farmland that has been lost to other uses;

**WHEREAS** a number of agri-environmental practices have been implemented and have significantly decreased the amount of phosphorus entering watercourses;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

➤ **The government and the MDDELCC**

- To immediately amend the REA so that all cultivable farmland lost to non-agricultural uses since 2004, and all that will be lost in the future, can be replaced by the reclamation of new farmland of equivalent or greater agronomic potential;
- To not require environmental characterization of the new farmland by a biologist;

➤ **The MAPAQ and the CPTAQ**

- To defend and work to achieve the objective of keeping land under cultivation by providing data that will allow land lost to non-agricultural uses to be inventoried and accounted for;

➤ **The MAMOT, MRCs, the Fédération québécoise des municipalités (FQM), and the Union des municipalités du Québec (UMQ)**

- To make the necessary arrangements to ensure that municipal tree-cutting regulations do not prevent the reclamation of new farmland intended to replace land that has been lost to other uses;

➤ **The UPA**

- To increase pressure on the relevant authorities so that the regulatory provisions prohibiting increases in land under cultivation are amended;
- To make this matter an urgent priority and to act accordingly.

### 3.5. MANURE SPREADING AFTER OCTOBER 1

**WHEREAS** the REA limits the volume of manure that can be spread after October 1 to 35 percent of the annual volume produced and requires farmers to obtain express recommendations from an agronomist so that the latter can dictate the spreading conditions;

**WHEREAS** with climate change, the growing season is extending further into the fall;

**WHEREAS** the vast majority of land in corn and soy is not harvested until October 1;

**WHEREAS** spreading operations pose a high risk of compaction when conducted in the spring on land that is relatively poorly drained;

**WHEREAS** the limitations on spreading after October 1 require certain farmers to divide up their spreading activities over the month of September, even though it would often be more agronomically and environmentally advantageous to spread later into the fall;

**WHEREAS** a recent study from the Institut de recherche et de développement en agroenvironnement indicated that spreading pig slurry late in the fall confers certain agronomic and environmental advantages that would justify the promotion of this practice;

**WHEREAS** according to this study, late spreading would enable farmers to take advantage of the lower temperatures and slower microbial activity that are responsible for the mineralization and nitrification of nitrogen to both prevent losses to the environment and to better synchronize nitrate availability to the time when nitrogen uptake occurs in plants;

**WHEREAS** the study mentions that no new argument supports a restriction on spreading activities carried out in late autumn, after October 1, if slurry is applied to unfrozen ground with no snow and incorporated soon after spreading;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MDDELCC**

- To revise the regulatory provisions in the REA relative to fall spreading by reassessing the limits on spreading after October 1;
- To leave the responsibility for determining the optimal spreading practices based on the conditions specific to each farm to the agrologist who signed the agri-environmental plan;

##### ➤ **The Ordre des agronomes du Québec (OAQ)**

- To support the UPA in its efforts to have the regulatory provisions in the REA regarding fall spreading amended;
- To encourage the MDDELCC to amend the REA to extend the period in which manure spreading is permitted.

### 3.6. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND RESPECT FOR OWNERSHIP RIGHTS

**WHEREAS** the wildlife branch of the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) is looking to extend the regulatory provisions that protect fish habitats and threatened or vulnerable wildlife species to privately owned land;

**WHEREAS** the government adopted the *Act respecting the conservation of wetlands and bodies of water* in June, and new constraints and obligations will be imposed on landowners;

**WHEREAS** forest owners and farmers want to manage their land in a manner that is respectful of the environment;

**WHEREAS** the laws and regulations restrict ownership rights, especially for the sake of protecting natural environments in the collective interest;

**WHEREAS** it is unfair that certain citizens are subject to constraints on how to manage their land in order to meet the needs of the community without any sharing of the associated costs;

**WHEREAS** the government has not created any compensation measures for owners who are forced to preserve a sometimes large portion of their property in its natural state;

**WHEREAS** awareness, education, and incentives can generate more results than regulatory constraints;

**WHEREAS** certain MRCs and municipalities are adopting regulations requiring riparian strips to be wider than the minimum width prescribed by the *Protection Policy for Lakeshores, Riverbanks, Littoral Zones and Floodplains*, thereby reducing the amount of cultivable land;

**WHEREAS** the MRCs have, under the *Act respecting the conservation of wetlands and bodies of water*, an obligation to adopt a management plan for wetlands and bodies of water within the next five years, in collaboration with watershed-based organizations;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MFFP and the MDDELCC**

- To ensure that all initiatives to protect wetlands, bodies of water, and threatened or vulnerable wildlife species on private land focus on awareness, education, and incentives before resorting to regulatory constraints;

##### ➤ **The Québec government**

- To undertake negotiations with the UPA to establish rules to financially compensate agricultural and forestry producers who are obligated to provide environmental goods and services to the community beyond a certain level that compromises the normal use of their property;

➤ **The UPA**

- To make the necessary representations to the MRCs to obligate them to invite the UPA's regional federations to help prepare future management plans for wetlands and bodies of water;

➤ **The MRCs**

- To compensate farmers in cases where municipal regulations that constrain agricultural practices go beyond provincial requirements;
- To involve the agricultural community in identifying, characterizing, and mapping wetlands, bodies of water, and threatened or vulnerable wildlife species.

### **3.7. MUNICIPAL REGULATIONS AND THE CAPACITY OF BUSINESSES TO ADAPT TO NEW ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS**

**WHEREAS** the new animal welfare requirements will obligate numerous farmers to modify and retrofit their livestock buildings;

**WHEREAS** all pork businesses will have to comply with the new animal welfare standards on housing of sows and gilts by 2024;

**WHEREAS** livestock producers will have to expand their existing farrowing area in order to meet the new standards for sows and gilts;

**WHEREAS** complying with these new animal welfare standards requires major investment;

**WHEREAS** in this context, certain farrowing operators or farrow-to-finish operators in the pork industry could consider converting finishing barns, which would involve increasing the number of animal units to achieve optimal usage of the existing building area;

**WHEREAS** municipal regulations should not pose an obstacle to implementing animal welfare standards for livestock buildings or unduly compromise the viability and sustainability of agricultural businesses;

**WHEREAS** the improved practices and changing standards in the layout of hog production buildings have reduced the odours that are generated, while this production sector is still subject to measures that could compromise the viability and sustainability of businesses in certain MRCs, such as limits on the allowable surface area of livestock buildings;

**WHEREAS** municipalities do not take into account new odour-reducing agricultural practices and building standards when establishing separating distances;

**WHEREAS** the requirements imposed by certain municipalities and MRCs deprive businesses of the flexibility they need in order to adapt to the new animal welfare requirements;

**WHEREAS** it is important for businesses to have a regulatory framework that enables them to invest and remain competitive;

**WHEREAS** dialogue with representatives from municipal bodies has, in certain cases, led to the revision of the measures enforced, thereby allowing projects to be carried out that would otherwise have been denied;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

➤ **The MAPAQ, the MAMOT, the FQM, the UMQ, and the MRCs**

- To take the necessary actions to ensure that municipal regulations do not compromise the viability and sustainability of livestock businesses whose owners wish to comply with the new animal welfare standards and, to this end, to ensure:
  - That separation distance requirements do not prevent business owners:
    - From increasing building surface area while maintaining at minimum the same number of animals;
    - From optimizing the current surface area of their existing buildings in livestock building conversions, even if this increases the number of animal units while still complying with environmental regulations;
  - That the limits imposed by certain MRCs and municipalities concerning maximum building size are reviewed;
  - That the allowable expansion in agricultural activities provided for in the LPTAA is increased to ensure the long-term viability of agricultural businesses;

➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To ensure that the responsibility for societal expectations concerning animal welfare be assumed by the government through investment assistance programs for all production types in which farmers face challenges in this regard, and that the National Farm Animal Care Council's codes of practice continue to be used as the reference;

➤ **The UPA and its regional federations**

- To take advantage of various meetings with municipal authorities to make them aware of how important it is for the regulatory framework to enable businesses to comply with the new animal welfare standards.

### 3.8. PRACTISING AGRICULTURE AROUND LAC SAINT-PIERRE

**WHEREAS** the Table de concertation régionale du lac Saint-Pierre (TCRLSP) has the specific objective of developing an action strategy to restore this ecosystem while taking into account the relevant social, economic, and environmental factors;

**WHEREAS** agricultural activities and wildlife have coexisted in the Lac Saint-Pierre for centuries and must continue to do so in future;

**WHEREAS** agricultural activities are a source of jobs, economic activity, and land use;

**WHEREAS** over the years, Lac Saint-Pierre has experienced a number of stressors that have disturbed the ecosystem, and this is a complex problem with multiple causes, such as impacts from industrial, municipal, agricultural, and maritime (transportation and vacationing) activities;

**WHEREAS** the TCRLSP must prepare an integrated water resource management plan that involves and holds accountable all industrial, municipal, agricultural, and maritime sectors of activity;

**WHEREAS** the future of Lac Saint-Pierre depends on a number of actions being taken to restore connectivity between the floodplain and the lake for the sake of both wildlife and agriculture, including watercourse maintenance in the littoral zone;

**WHEREAS** the TCRLSP's recommendations on coexistence between agriculture and wildlife in the littoral zone of Lac Saint-Pierre are incomplete, and implementing them would diminish the amount of land under cultivation and limit agricultural usage in the littoral zone;

**WHEREAS** farmers do not agree that they should have to comply with an action plan that does not encourage their adherence and commitment to the proposed solutions;

**WHEREAS** farmers have developed an action plan that will enable agricultural businesses to adapt to the issues facing Lac Saint-Pierre while at the same time fostering the development of sustainable farming activities, expertise, and consulting services;

**WHEREAS** adaptation measures for agricultural businesses will have to be developed;

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government, in its March 2017 budget, announced \$14 million in financial assistance over five years to protect biodiversity in the Lac Saint-Pierre area, and a government strategy for the lake has yet to be announced;

**WHEREAS** farmers want to develop a project, with the support of government and community stakeholders, that will achieve sustainable coexistence between agricultural activities and wildlife, the development of expertise and consulting services, and adaptation measures for agricultural businesses;

**WHEREAS** certain provisions in the TCRLSP's action plan are based on historic water level readings which are contested not only by agricultural businesses operating in the area but also by affected municipalities, and therefore there is a case that they should be updated;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To provide a government plan for Lac Saint-Pierre that:
  - Requires sustainable coexistence between agricultural activities and wildlife in the littoral zone while maintaining land under cultivation;
  - Ensures the development of agricultural expertise and consulting services;
  - Allows for adaptation on the part of agricultural businesses as well as profitability in the sector's farming activities;
  - Includes a special budget for watercourse maintenance and the creation of riparian strips in the littoral zone;
  - Includes a realistic timeline to allow agricultural businesses to adapt their activities to the issues facing Lac Saint-Pierre;

➤ **The MDDELCC and the MAPAQ**

- To provide adequate financial assistance to carry out an agriculture-wildlife coexistence project in the littoral zone of Lac Saint-Pierre;
- To work with the TCRLSP to ensure that the latter takes agronomic research and agricultural economics into account;

➤ **The affected MRCs and municipalities**

- To place priority on watercourse maintenance around the lake;

➤ **The UPA**

- To make the necessary representations to the TCRLSP to ask it to update the water level readings to ensure they reflect the reality on the ground and to adapt its action plan accordingly;
- To involve farmers and the union bodies that represent them in updating the water level readings.

### 3.9. WATERCOURSE MAINTENANCE IN RURAL AREAS

**WHEREAS** watercourse maintenance is essential to the proper drainage of farmland and to the maintenance of optimal agronomic and environmental conditions;

**WHEREAS** in the coming years, the restoration and creation of wetlands and bodies of water will influence the hydrology of land located upstream;

**WHEREAS** the drainage capacity of properties adjacent to such wetlands may be seriously compromised;

**WHEREAS** MRCs and municipalities are responsible for watercourse maintenance, and this is a collective responsibility;

**WHEREAS** work involving watercourses is an arduous undertaking given the rules that apply and the associated costs;

**WHEREAS** difficulties surrounding watercourse maintenance have been discussed with representatives from municipalities, who have a perspective that is similar to that of farmers;

**WHEREAS** the method for dividing up maintenance costs varies by municipality, and certain methods result in passing on the costs to a small number of agricultural businesses that must then absorb major expenses;

**WHEREAS** all activities taking place in a given watershed can affect watercourses, not only those contiguous with parts of watercourses requiring maintenance;

**WHEREAS** a number of MRCs and local municipalities to which MRCs have assigned certain responsibilities under section 108 of the *Municipal Powers Act* have little or no expertise in land use planning or watercourse maintenance, regardless of whether they are located in agricultural zones;

**WHEREAS** the procedure for handling watercourse maintenance in agricultural areas has been developed by the MDDELCC, the MFFP, and the MAMOT;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The UPA**

- To continue making representations to government and municipal bodies to make them fully aware that watercourses in rural areas require maintenance;
- To make the necessary representations to simplify the preliminary steps involved in watercourse maintenance;
- To continue using processes in collaboration with municipal authorities;

- To assess the usefulness of inviting all local authorities to fund watercourse maintenance activities through a universal dedicated property tax;
- To support local syndicates in allowing them to make the appropriate representations to MRCs or local municipalities in order to plan ahead for watercourse maintenance activities in their jurisdictions rather than waiting for problems to crop up as a result of improper drainage;
- To call for greater speed in analyzing and conducting watercourse maintenance activities, which should be completed within a twelve-month period following an application submission;

➤ **The MDDELCC**

- Not to consider as wetlands those that have been created by humans as a result of poor watercourse maintenance or by beaver dams;
- To specify the scope of the procedure for watercourse maintenance in agricultural areas based on the enforcement of the *Environment Quality Act* and the *Act respecting the conservation of wetlands and bodies of water*;

➤ **The MRCs and local municipalities**

- To plan ahead for watercourse maintenance in their jurisdictions rather than waiting for problems to crop up as a result of improper drainage.

### 3.10. PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT

**WHEREAS** jurisdiction over pesticide use is shared between the federal government (with pesticide approval given by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency) and the provincial government (pesticide use);

**WHEREAS** the report from the Auditor General of Québec on pesticide management in agricultural areas recommends that the MAPAQ expand the support and information tools offered to farmers so that they adopt integrated pest management more quickly;

**WHEREAS** the proposed regulations amending the *Pesticides Management Code* stipulate that farmers are obligated to obtain an agronomist's note prior to using certain pesticides that carry relatively high risk according to the MDDELCC;

**WHEREAS** the proposed amendment to the *Regulation respecting permits and certificates for the sale and use of pesticides* stipulates that a prescription to purchase certain pesticides is required;

**WHEREAS** the OAQ has developed guidance tools for agronomists who formulate recommendations on pesticide and fertilizer use;

**WHEREAS** the agronomist's note and prescription create an additional administrative burden that increases costs for farmers;

**WHEREAS** under the REA, most farmers are required to have an agroenvironmental fertilization plan (PAEF);

**WHEREAS** the PAEF is a planning tool signed by an agronomist whose services the farmers have already used;

**WHEREAS** integrated pest management requires research for the development of management tools adapted to the farm, alternative solutions to using pesticides, and knowledge transfer and consulting services;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MDDELCC**

- To remove from the proposed regulation to amend the *Pesticides Management Code* the farmer's obligation to obtain an agronomist's note in order to use pesticides;
- To withdraw from the proposed regulation to amend the *Regulation respecting permits and certificates for the sale and use of pesticides* the obligation to provide an agronomist's prescription;

- To create a working committee to establish a plan for optimal on-farm pesticide management of pesticides deemed to be the riskiest;
- To include in the PAEF the planning of the justified use of pesticides identified as being the riskiest;

➤ **The governments of Quebec and Canada**

- To increase investment in research and development to develop effective and profitable alternatives for agricultural businesses to use;
- To increase investment to fund knowledge transfer activities concerning safe pesticide use and to raise the amounts allocated for agricultural businesses in the pesticides management component of the Programme services-conseils (consulting services program);

➤ **The Quebec government**

- To ensure, through the MAPAQ and the Réseaux Agriconseils, that farmers have access to consultants who are experts in integrated pest management so that they have guidance in making decisions;

➤ **The UPA**

- To put forth all necessary efforts in its representations to government agencies, in collaboration with all its affiliate bodies, to ensure its plant protection action plan (2017–2019) is implemented.

### 3.11. PRIME-VERT PROGRAM

**WHEREAS** the purpose of the Prime-Vert Program (hereafter referred to as the “Program” in this resolution) is to guide farmers who are involved in practices that combine economic and environmental performance;

**WHEREAS** the MAPAQ held consultations prior to renewing the Program as part of the federal-provincial *Canadian Agricultural Partnership* agreement renewal;

**WHEREAS** the MDDELCC’s Québec Pesticide Strategy 2015–2018 will impose new pesticide requirements that farmers will have to follow;

**WHEREAS** consumers and agri-food industry actors require that agricultural production methods be respectful of the environment;

**WHEREAS** agricultural businesses must adapt to the vagaries of climate change;

**WHEREAS** farmers must compete with foreign products despite the absence of reciprocity in environmental standards and regulations;

**WHEREAS** the eligibility measures and criteria for several Program components do not meet the expectations of all farmers;

**WHEREAS** the level of investment in environmental protection varies greatly depending on the context of each individual business, especially with respect to the soil’s vulnerability to erosion and the greater or lesser presence of watercourses;

**WHEREAS** manure pits are getting older on average;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To increase the Program budget;
- To increase the maximum assistance available under the agri-environmental project component to \$100,000 per agricultural operation for the duration of the Program, while keeping the reimbursement for eligible expenses at 70 percent for individual projects and 90 percent for joint projects;
- To grant agricultural businesses greater latitude in choosing which financial assistance measures address their agri-environmental priorities, without limiting the maximum financial assistance per measure or group of measures, up to the maximum assistance amount per business for the Program duration;
- To provide for additional greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measures;
- To provide financial assistance for advising businesses on the new regulatory requirements;

- To enhance the Program component on non-point-source pollution;
- To review the terms and administrative rules of the component on watershed-based collective water-management approaches (duration, financing, number of farmers, territory, etc.) to ensure adequate financing and to ensure that projects are completed within a realistic timeframe;
- To renew the regional and interregional Program component and to increase the maximum amount and reimbursement for eligible expenses to 90 percent;
- To increase the amount of financial aid and the level of reimbursement for eligible expenses, both for information and awareness activities and for the production and dissemination of associated materials and resources;
- To ensure that new techniques recognized in the field of integrated pest management are quickly included in the measures financed through the Program;
- To provide for financial assistance for maintaining and replacing manure pits;
- To provide financial aid for agricultural businesses whose municipalities require that odour-blocking barriers or manure pit covers be installed.

### **3.12. IMPACT OF CARBON PRICING ON AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY BUSINESSES**

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government instituted a cap-and-trade system for GHG emissions in 2013 aimed at the largest emitters;

**WHEREAS** this system preceded the rules proposed by the federal government in May 2017 that required provinces to set a minimum carbon price and to reach reduction targets;

**WHEREAS** the provisions adopted in Quebec are more stringent than the minimum requirements of the federal government and could be maintained in their entirety;

**WHEREAS** since January 1, 2015, fossil fuel importers and distributors must now purchase GHG emission credits and this cost is passed on to consumers, including Quebec agricultural and forestry producers;

**WHEREAS** Quebec farmers have experienced rising costs of fossil energy since that date, which accounts for almost 80 percent of the agriculture sector's energy needs;

**WHEREAS** according to the analysis conducted by the UPA, the increased purchase price of fossil fuels attributable to carbon pricing drove up Quebec farmers' production costs by \$38 million in 2017, or approximately \$1,300 per farm;

**WHEREAS** for a typical farm specializing in corn-soy production,<sup>2</sup> this figure was about \$2,400 in 2017;

**WHEREAS** this situation makes it harder for Quebec farmers to remain competitive;

**WHEREAS** carbon market revenues are being fed into the Green Plan to fund the completion of the 2013–2020 Climate Change Action Plan;

**WHEREAS** the agriculture industry currently has no alternative to fossil energy for a great many purposes;

**WHEREAS** farm access to the three-phase electrical grid would open the door to the replacement of diesel motors with electric motors;

**WHEREAS** the percentage of farms currently served by the three-phase electrical grid is low;

**WHEREAS** British Columbia, Alberta, and Manitoba have given their farmers exemptions from the carbon tax on fuel (gasoline and diesel);

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<sup>2</sup> Estimate for a typical farm specializing in corn-soy production on 320 hectares based on \$18.51 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>.

**WHEREAS** the carbon market should in principle create an incentive to adopt agricultural practices that encourage GHG reductions but is in no way adapted to the reality on Quebec farms;

**WHEREAS** only one agricultural GHG reduction quantification protocol is currently recognized, and it deals with methane capture through manure storage facilities;

**WHEREAS** opening up farm access to natural gas would reduce GHG emissions;

**WHEREAS** the percentage of farms currently served by both the three-phase electrical grid and natural gas network is low;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

➤ **The government and the MDDELCC**

- To provide a carbon pricing exemption for the agricultural and forestry sectors by providing compensation equivalent to the amount payable;
- To improve three-phase electrical grid and natural gas coverage in rural Quebec;
- To improve the conditions of farmer access to the carbon market, specifically by allowing for the grouping of GHG reduction projects;
- To make more quantification protocols available that would allow for compensatory credits.

### 3.13. AERONAUTICS ACT

**WHEREAS** numerous aerodrome or landing-strip construction projects have been proposed in agricultural zones;

**WHEREAS** aeronautics-related activities fall exclusively under federal jurisdiction and, moreover, the courts have rendered provincial land-use planning legislation unenforceable, most notably the LPTAA and the *Act respecting land use planning and development*;

**WHEREAS** developers wishing to build aerodromes or landing strips are taking advantage of this situation to encroach upon farmland;

**WHEREAS** these projects, when located outside the built-up zone of cities and villages, do not require certification, authorization, or approval from Transport Canada;

**WHEREAS** under section 4.31 of the *Aeronautics Act*, the federal transport minister has the power to prohibit the construction of an aerodrome or landing strip if he or she deems that its operation could compromise aviation security or is not in the public interest;

**WHEREAS** there has been a complete lack of engagement from the federal transport minister, after numerous demands from the UPA and from municipal, community, environmental, and citizen groups, even after two unanimous motions in the National Assembly of Québec;

**WHEREAS** the legal context that prevailed at the time the *Aeronautics Act* was adopted has since changed;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The UPA**

- To work with municipal unions to gain their support to ensure that the *Aeronautics Act* is amended and that it recognizes the constitutional powers of provincial legislatures when it comes to land-use planning;

##### ➤ **The Premier of Quebec and all MNAs**

- To apply pressure to the Government of Canada to amend the *Aeronautics Act* to recognize the constitutional powers of provincial legislatures when it comes to land-use planning and the protection of farmland and agricultural activities;

##### ➤ **The federal transport minister**

- To invoke section 4.31 in the Act in cases where the construction of an aerodrome or landing strip is not in the public interest or does not meet social acceptability criteria;
- To amend *Aeronautics Act* to recognize the constitutional powers of provincial legislatures when it comes to land-use planning and the protection of farmland and agricultural activities.





# Agricultural Programs and Policies

## Workshop 4



POUVOIR NOURRIR  
POUVOIR GRANDIR

*L'Union des producteurs agricoles*

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Résolutions adoptées au Congrès général de décembre 2017





## 4.1. FUNDING FOR THE REVIEW AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CANADIAN ORGANIC STANDARDS

**WHEREAS** the regulatory system surrounding the Canadian Organic Standards (COS) was instituted by the federal government to control and facilitate interprovincial and international trade in organic products, and the government therefore has the responsibility of maintaining this system to ensure rigour and credibility in organic production and marketing systems in Canada;

**WHEREAS** the Standards Council of Canada requires that all standards of this type be comprehensively reviewed every five years, and without such a review they become void and unenforceable under the Canadian rules;

**WHEREAS** maintaining this standard is vital in enabling farmers to access organic markets, both domestically and through exports via organic equivalency arrangements with the United States, the European Union, and Japan, and these markets are both growing and creating major economic spinoffs in our country;

**WHEREAS** in applying an administrative policy of cost recovery, the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB), which owns the COS, stated its intent to pass on the costs of the standards review, as well as those associated with all subsequent modifications; to the organic industry;

**WHEREAS** unlike our trading partners, specifically the United States and the European Union, the Government of Canada has not instituted any funding program to support future COS review activities;

**WHEREAS** businesses in the organic industry should not have to solely absorb the cost associated with reviewing and maintaining the COS instituted by the government if they are to remain competitive;

**WHEREAS** levying the costs of reviewing the standards and passing them on to the industry would have a disproportionately large impact on smaller organic businesses;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The Government of Canada**

- To provide a sufficient budget to ensure funding of the COS review activities that must be completed by 2020, in accordance with CGSB procedures;

#### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To show leadership in making sure the federal government provides this funding.

## 4.2. GENETICALLY MODIFIED ALFALFA

**WHEREAS** the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) proceeded with registering genetically modified (GM) alfalfa varieties, which authorizes the marketing of the glyphosate-tolerant (Roundup Ready) or low-lignin seed all across Canada;

**WHEREAS** such varieties have been marketed only in provinces in eastern Canada since 2016;

**WHEREAS** the company that holds the rights to the technology contained in the GM alfalfa varieties available in Canada, Forage Genetics International (FGI), stated that it had no intention to introduce these varieties in western Canada, thereby recognizing the risk of contamination;

**WHEREAS** a study funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and published in August 2012 shows that GM alfalfa can spread across large distances to contaminate non-GM alfalfa fields, in particular through pollen carried by insect pollinators;

**WHEREAS** a United States Department of Agriculture study conducted in 2011 and published in 2015 detected the presence of wild alfalfa contaminated by GM alfalfa in 27 percent of sectors examined in three states;

**WHEREAS** alfalfa is the first cultivated perennial crop to undergo genetic modification, and biological and ecological facts such as insect pollination, seed size, and presence of wild or non-cultivated alfalfa indicates that cross-contamination of non-GM alfalfa is inevitable;

**WHEREAS** many agricultural production sectors (honey, organics, forage crops, dairy, beef cattle, goats, sheep) in Quebec could suffer major economic damage if their crops are contaminated by GM alfalfa;

**WHEREAS** on April 20, 2016, a number of organizations including the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA), urged the federal government to revoke the registration of all GM alfalfa varieties, which it still had not done one year later;

**WHEREAS** exporting products to Europe is desired, and GM products do not meet European requirements;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The Government of Canada**

- To revoke the registration of GM alfalfa varieties so that they are taken off the market;
- To conduct rigorous analyses of all imported alfalfa seed by requiring that batches of imported seed be subject to mandatory genetic testing at the border;
- To monitor follow involuntary GM alfalfa populations in areas where such varieties have been seeded;

➤ **The UPA and the Quebec government**

- To ask seed companies not to use or sell GM alfalfa seed;
- To advise farmers not to purchase or use GM alfalfa seed;
- To determine whether the provincial government can legislate on this matter and, if so, to take the necessary actions to prevent the use of GM alfalfa;

➤ **The governments of Quebec and Canada**

- To ensure that the highest level of scientific rigour serves as the cornerstone of evaluation and risk management in the various departments and agencies when it comes to approving and regulating technologies and biotechnologies.

### 4.3. PROGRAMME DE DÉVELOPPEMENT SECTORIEL

**WHEREAS** in December 2015, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Ministère de l’Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l’Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) announced the creation of the Programme de développement sectoriel (PDS) (sector development program) to replace the Programme de soutien aux stratégies de développement 2 (development strategy support program 2) and the Programme d’appui financier aux regroupements et aux associations de producteurs désignés (PAFRAD) (financial support program for designated producers’ groups and associations);

**WHEREAS** the PDS, unlike the PAFRAD, does not cover operating costs for farmers’ associations;

**WHEREAS** the cancelling of the PAFRAD has had some non-negligible effects on the organization of farmers’ groups and associations;

**WHEREAS** the purpose of the PDS is to help agri-food industries work in synergy to design and complete large-scale collective projects to benefit the sector as a whole;

**WHEREAS** the PDS was implemented through the federal-provincial policy framework *Growing Forward 2* and will come to a close when the policy framework expires in March 2018;

**WHEREAS** the future of the PDS has not been considered in collaboration with farmers’ groups and associations;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To renew the PDS;
- To ensure that the criteria for the PDS allow for the circumstances of applicant groups to be taken into account such that their share of contributions is based on their financial means;
- To admit costs associated with project supervision and management on the part of groups with limited funding as eligible expenses under the PDS;
- To allow the PDS to accept funding applications for projects at all times and to make the proposal application forms simpler and more user-friendly to improve efficiency;
- To make all agriculture and forestry producers’ organizations and associations eligible for the PDS.

#### 4.4. BIOSECURITY RULES FOR LOCAL AGRICULTURE

**WHEREAS** biosecurity encompasses the suite of preventative and regulatory measures to reduce the risk of spread and transmission of infectious disease to human populations, crops, poultry, and other livestock;

**WHEREAS** farmers are subject to stringent rules pertaining not only to biosecurity, but also to food safety and traceability;

**WHEREAS** the purpose of implementing these rules is to address social acceptability and consumer concerns;

**WHEREAS** these obligations represent major expenses for farmers, in terms of both developing the rules required by the market (some of which are created by marketing boards) and ensuring that standards are followed in their operations;

**WHEREAS** most citizens are not familiar with the rules governing biosecurity, food safety, and traceability and fail to appreciate the risks and negative impacts involved in epidemics, both for the population and for agricultural businesses;

**WHEREAS** local agriculture is intensifying and is being practiced by people who are not familiar with all the rules governing biosecurity, food safety, and traceability, and who do not realize how they may be impacting neighbouring businesses;

**WHEREAS** enforcing the rules governing biosecurity, food safety, and traceability needs to be everyone's business if the risks of spreading diseases and infections to existing herds are to be mitigated;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To work with the relevant departments and organizations to ensure that measures are taken to adapt the rules governing biosecurity, food safety, and traceability to the context of local agriculture.

#### 4.5. DEPREDATION BY WILD ANIMALS

**WHEREAS** agricultural and forestry producers suffer damages resulting from the overabundance of wild animals along with associated financial losses;

**WHEREAS** certain regions have subzones that are highly problematic with respect to depredation by wildlife;

**WHEREAS** feeding wild animals, i.e., providing food through human actions, magnifies the problems associated with increased presence of such animals (crop damage, road accidents, etc.);

**WHEREAS** the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec (MFFP) is already aware of the negative effects of feeding wild animals and is considering prohibiting the practice;

**WHEREAS** hunting as a means of wild-animal population control is allowed only at certain times of the year;

**WHEREAS** every year the MFFP grants a certain number of special hunting licences, by lottery, for the killing of antlerless deer and determines the eligibility criteria for this;

**WHEREAS** in order to be eligible for this lottery, property owners must own a minimum of four hectares in one of the zones for which licences are issued;

**WHEREAS** the new white-tailed deer management plan will be renewed in 2020;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### ➤ **The MFFP**

- To calculate the number of wild animals (deer, turkey, bears, and other species) per subzone in order to support a request for more hunting licences and longer hunting periods in the most overpopulated zones and subzones;
- To prohibit the feeding of wild animals, especially near sensitive production sites, except for the purposes of baiting them during the months of July to November (e.g., in preparation for hunting);
- To adjust the number of hunting licences issued by lottery for killing antlerless deer based on the size of the area owned by agricultural and forestry landowners;
- To make all agricultural and forestry landowners eligible for the lottery, regardless of their legal structure;
- To issue hunting licences for overpopulated subzones directly to landowners;
- To authorize and encourage hunting of all wild animals that cause damage to agricultural crops;

- To ensure that registered agricultural and forestry producers who have hunting licences can automatically obtain double-harvest licences for white-tailed deer;

➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To provide adequate compensation for losses incurred;
- To conduct a study on the economic and environmental damage caused by wildlife (deer, turkey, bears, and other species);

➤ **The Canadian Wildlife Service**

- To authorize the hunting of sandhill cranes in overpopulated zones.

## 4.6. WILD TURKEYS

**WHEREAS** the wild turkey population is increasing and the presence of these birds has been recorded in most regions;

**WHEREAS** more and more livestock farmers and other agricultural producers are observing the constant presence of wild turkeys near livestock buildings, near grain silos, and in cultivated fields;

**WHEREAS** farmers are experiencing damage and inconvenience from wild turkeys;

**WHEREAS** there is a risk that wild turkeys can transmit diseases to livestock and threaten compliance with food safety requirements for crops (e.g., CanadaGAP);

**WHEREAS** the measures to control these animals around production sites, including hunting rules, are poorly adapted;

**WHEREAS** the regulations are very strict and state that wild turkey hunting is permitted only in spring, in the morning, and in certain regions for bearded turkeys;

**WHEREAS** it is not farmers' responsibility to absorb the damage caused by wild turkeys;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The MFFP**

- To take an annual inventory, by region, of population changes in wild turkeys;
- To relax the rules governing wild turkey hunting, for example, by increasing the number of licences, authorizing the hunting of females, and by authorizing hunting in the fall and across the province;
- To inform farmers of their right to take action to reduce losses and to allow them to kill wild turkeys that cause damage to their operations;
- To adequately compensate farms for the losses and damages they incur as a result of wild turkeys;
- To extend the wild turkey hunting period for both males and females, and to add a second hunting period in the fall;
- To consider wild turkeys as small game rather than large game;
- To authorize the hunting of wild turkeys on baited sites;

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To take the necessary steps with the MFFP and the MAPAQ to implement concrete solutions;
- To request support from the Équipe québécoise de contrôle des maladies avicoles in this matter.

## 4.7. VETERINARY SERVICES

**WHEREAS** it is very important for animal production industries to have access to veterinary services at all times across the province;

**WHEREAS** it is currently difficult to secure replacements for currently practising veterinarians and to fill service gaps, especially in outlying areas;

**WHEREAS** the agreement on the transition of the Programme d'amélioration de la santé animale du Québec (ASAQ) (Quebec animal health improvement program) to the Programme intégré de santé animale du Québec (PISAQ) (Quebec integrated animal health program) was renewed for a two-year period (2017–2019);

**WHEREAS** animal welfare is important to both farmers and consumers;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To maintain the current ASAQ program, which provides direct assistance to farmers to facilitate access to preventative and curative veterinary services throughout Quebec;
- To put resources in place to ensure fair and accessible veterinary service in all regions, particularly when it comes to:
  - Maintaining and enhancing incentives for practising veterinarians to settle in regions with shortages;
  - Making up for reduced or interrupted veterinary services for farm animals;
  - Ensuring a new cohort of veterinarians, especially for large animals;
- To articulate the economic risks of losing veterinary services in the regions and inform various organizations about these risks;

#### ➤ **The Ordre des médecins vétérinaires du Québec**

- To ensure access to veterinary care and to the profession in order to resolve service interruptions throughout Quebec, specifically by analyzing veterinary resources in each territory and by collaborating with veterinary associations and decision makers to plan for a new cohort of veterinarians and facilitate its integration;
- To highlight the importance of the veterinary profession for large animals, and to recruit more students.

## 4.8. PETROLEUM RESOURCES AND FARMLAND

**WHEREAS** the *Petroleum Resources Act* was adopted by the Quebec government on December 10, 2016, even though the UPA had previously taken a position calling for the permanent agricultural zone to be omitted entirely from petroleum resource development;

**WHEREAS** farmland, which has already been reduced, is threatened on multiple fronts including being crossed by pipelines if nothing is done to prevent this;

**WHEREAS** a consultation is currently taking place on petroleum resource regulations that will apply to petroleum exploration, production, and land-based storage activities and to the construction and use of pipelines;

**WHEREAS** there will be major impacts on agricultural and forestry operations resulting from the implementation of these proposals;

**WHEREAS** petroleum resource exploration and production rights are already numerous and extensive in the St. Lawrence lowlands;

**WHEREAS** the proposed regulations open the door to hydraulic fracking in Quebec despite the lack of social acceptability for such activity;

**WHEREAS** the economic spinoffs of the agri-food industry and its sustainability in all parts of Quebec are considerable relative to those associated with petroleum resources development;

**WHEREAS** Quebec set ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets in its Energy Policy, including cutting the quantity of petroleum products consumed by 40 percent;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To prohibit petroleum resource exploration, production, and storage activities in agricultural zones for the sake of protecting agricultural and forestry activities on Quebec land and drinking water sources;
- To prohibit fracking in agricultural zones, especially hydraulic fracking, given the lack of social acceptability;
- To ensure the new regulations require that developers reach an agreement with the accredited organization representing farmers that adequately protects farmers in the event of any new pipeline construction on farmland;
- To withdraw the subsurface rights (claims) granted to petroleum companies.

#### **4.9. COHERENT APPLICATION OF THE FARM PROPERTY TAX CREDIT PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS** the rapid increase in land values is putting more pressure on the farm property tax credit program (PCTFA) with each renewal of the property assessment roll, and this increase has accelerated in recent years;

**WHEREAS** between 2010 and 2016, total amount of taxes paid by farmers eligible for the PCTFA grew by \$44.2 million, while the amount paid by the MAPAQ to the municipalities in tax credits increased by \$30.6 million;

**WHEREAS** there is a fear, which has now materialized, that property tax increases attributable to the agricultural sector are creating increased pressure on the PCTFA to the point of exceeding the growth limit set on program costs;

**WHEREAS** PCTFA-related costs for the year 2016 exceeded the growth limit set under the law by 4.3 percent, and the MAPAQ is now asking farmers to pay the difference for these costs at a total of \$6.3 million;

**WHEREAS** the Quebec government attempted to unilaterally reform the PCTFA, which would have increased the net taxes owed by farm businesses by an average of 45 percent for 2017;

**WHEREAS** the government committed to paying back credits that were not applied to 2017 tax accounts, while these payments were announced in February and still have not been sent to all farmers, who in fact initially received tax bills for 2016;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### **➤ The MAPAQ**

- To abolish the enforcement of the 5-percent growth limit for PCTFA-related costs, retroactively as of 2016;
- To promptly cancel the bills received by farmers asking them to pay for the 4.3-percent excess in PCTFA-related costs in 2016, and to return the monies paid to date for these bills;
- To reimburse farmers as soon as possible for overpayments resulting from the now-abolished reform,
- To absorb, through the PCTFA, all net increases in taxes for farm businesses, until such time as sustainable solutions to the farm property tax problems have been implemented.

#### **4.10. FAIRER MUNICIPAL TAXES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY PRODUCERS**

**WHEREAS** land is a coveted resource that is under constant pressure chiefly resulting from its rarity, speculation related to its safe-investment quality, and urban development;

**WHEREAS** in municipalities where agricultural buildings are found, their average taxable value has grown by 44 percent since 2010 and by at least 37 percent for wooded areas, compared to 30 percent for residential buildings, in a time of accelerated growth in the value of agricultural buildings;

**WHEREAS** since 2007, municipalities have had the ability to apply a separate rate for the agricultural buildings category to limit the shifting of the tax burden onto such buildings, but the exercise of this rate is voluntary and not widespread;

**WHEREAS** the *Act respecting municipal taxation* was amended in 2017 to set a minimum tax rate for agricultural buildings at 66.6 percent of the general tax rate, rather than being based on shifting the tax burden, and this minimum rate in some cases higher than the special tax rate currently applied;

**WHEREAS** forestry buildings are not included in a building category, but rather included in various other categories, making it impossible to apply a separate tax rate for managed wooded areas;

**WHEREAS** the amounts received through the Programme de remboursement des taxes foncières (PRTF) (property tax reimbursement program) for recognized forestry producers are counted as taxable income, thereby reducing the assistance granted to the forestry sector;

**WHEREAS** the government has shown a lack of openness to the numerous initiatives put forth by the UPA to adapt the municipal tax environment for agricultural and forestry producers, including the PCTFA and the PRTF, which would better respond to the needs expressed, in a context where other Canadian and international jurisdictions have taken action;

**WHEREAS** there are simple solutions that can be implemented quickly to help agricultural and forestry producers pay fairer taxes with respect to the municipal services received, to stabilize the portion of their income dedicated to paying property taxes, and to reduce pressure on the PCTFA budget;

**WHEREAS** the UPA has made property taxes a priority in all its representations, with the objective of creating a more competitive tax environment as quickly as possible for agricultural and forestry producers;

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

### ➤ **The Quebec premier**

- To take immediate action with the relevant ministers, in partnership with the UPA, to ensure that sustainable solutions for agricultural and forestry property taxes are implemented,

### ➤ **The Quebec government**

- To amend the *Act respecting municipal taxation* to create a fairer and more competitive tax environment by:
  - Creating a building category for managed forests owned by forestry producers registered under section 130 of the *Sustainable Forest Development Act*;
  - Instituting a ceiling on the tax rate applied to agricultural buildings and buildings on managed forest land;
  - Instituting a ceiling on the tax rate for farmland and managed forests to mitigate the influence of external factors on the value of an asset that is essential for production;
  - Abolishing the floor corresponding to 66.6 percent of the general tax rate, which was introduced in the *Act respecting municipal taxation* in June 2017 through Bill 122 (paragraph 2 of section 244.49.0.1);
- To make the necessary amendments to the PCTFA so that it provides sufficient support to:
  - Establish fairness not only among farmers but also relative to other taxpayers;
  - Maintain the property taxes paid by farmers at current levels in order to stabilize this expense item and encourage business development;
- To cease counting the amounts received through the PRTF as taxable income;
- To create a transition committee bringing together all stakeholders affected by these amendments, starting with municipal unions, regional county municipalities (MRCs), and government departments (specifically the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire and the MAPAQ), with formal participation from the UPA.

#### **4.11. SOIL DRAINAGE AND LIMING SUPPORT PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS** drainage and liming are activities that both foster soil health and require investment on the part of producers;

**WHEREAS** helping producers in this initiative would quickly yield spinoffs in soil productivity and, by extension, in Quebec agricultural businesses;

**WHEREAS** the purpose of the Programme de soutien au drainage et au chaulage des terres (soil drainage and liming support program, hereafter called the “Program” in this resolution) is to improve productivity and improve land with agricultural potential;

**WHEREAS** the Program was announced in the 2016 Quebec budget with a focus on certain regions before it was extended to 34 MRCs before the 2017 Quebec budget;

**WHEREAS** the Program will end on March 31, 2019, at which point there will no longer remain sufficient funds to pay expenses;

**WHEREAS** the amounts associated with the applications submitted under the Program greatly exceed the money made available each year, with no ability to carry expenses forward;

**WHEREAS** the amounts allocated for purchasing lime and the costs of drainage operations are limited each year, for the duration of the Program, and are often lower than the actual costs;

**WHEREAS** there have been major delays in processing applications, with many of them pending;

**WHEREAS** the liming of maple sugar bushes is excluded from the list of projects eligible for liming activities;

**WHEREAS** producers have to put up as much investment in these activities as the MAPAQ and want their investments to be profitable and useful;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### **➤ The MAPAQ**

- To increase the budget in order to respond adequately to farmers’ true needs in all regions in which the Program would be of strategic benefit, including the liming of maple sugar bushes;
- To relax the Program eligibility conditions such that they are essentially based on agronomic criteria, in order to allow for the completion of projects to increase soil productivity on farms;
- To renew the Program in order to facilitate access for multi-year drainage activities;

- To ensure that the amounts allocated are sufficient to cover the costs involved in liming and draining activities (indexing), and to monitor the actual prices in the affected areas;
- To allow producers to conduct their own liming and drainage operations and grant them a lump sum of approximately 40 percent of the cost of a contractor;
- Prioritize less well-drained regions.

## 4.12. AGRICULTURAL CONSULTING SUPPORT PROGRAM

**WHEREAS** agricultural businesses have growing needs for specialized consulting services to ensure adaptation and innovation in the industry in the face of the various challenges to sustainable agricultural development;

**WHEREAS** it would be beneficial for more businesses to use such services, in all production sectors;

**WHEREAS** the agricultural business support programs under the new *Canadian Agricultural Partnership* must be renewed in time for the period from April 1, 2018, to March 31, 2023;

**WHEREAS** it is important for agricultural businesses to receive professional and financial advice in dealing with issues both individually and collectively;

**WHEREAS** agricultural consultants work directly with businesses and require appropriate resources and skills to offer high-quality, cutting-edge consulting services;

**WHEREAS** government funding is of strategic importance in addressing particular requirements, specifically regulatory ones, whose social benefits are not rewarded by the market;

**WHEREAS** agricultural businesses need independent consulting services to support them in making decisions;

**WHEREAS** the Réseaux Agriconseils play a preponderant role in implementing the agricultural consulting support program (PSC), which agricultural businesses are using;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To increase the budget allocated to agricultural consulting services, including the PSC, in connection with the next strategic agricultural framework (the *Canadian Agricultural Partnership*) so that more businesses use it;
- To provide greater financial support for the commitments of the PSC (2013–2018) for:
  - Agricultural businesses, by raising the assistance ceilings, both for consulting services intended to improve productivity and for environmental activities, in order to foster their innovation, development, and improved performance;
  - Awareness, information, and demonstration activities that allow farmers to discuss the problems, challenges, and opportunities agricultural businesses face, in both the agri-environmental and techno-economic fields;
  - The maintenance and development of the group consulting model;

- To ensure that organizations that support development knowledge transfer to consultants and agricultural businesses are eligible for financial assistance, such as that available through the Pôle d'expertise en services-conseils agricoles;
- To encourage the optimization and delivery of consulting services to agricultural businesses by minimizing the administrative burden for consultants, thus allowing them to play their true role of advising farmers;
- To allocate adequate funding for neutral consulting services delivered only by consultants who are not related to the clients;
- To renew the mandate of the Réseaux Agriconseils to manage programs associated with consulting services and to increase their operating budgets based on their needs.





# Plenary



POUVOIR NOURRIR  
POUVOIR GRANDIR

*L'Union des producteurs agricoles*

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2017 General Congress



## 1. AGRICULTURAL PLAN TO ACCOMPANY THE FUTURE QUEBEC BIO-FOOD POLICY

**WHEREAS** the Ministère de l’Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l’Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) initiated a consultation process, in which three preparatory meetings and a summit have been held, to establish a Quebec bio-food policy to guide the development of a prosperous bio-food industry;

**WHEREAS** the emphasis in this process has been on consumer expectations;

**WHEREAS** the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) has developed concrete proposals based on the issues raised by the various players in this consultation process;

**WHEREAS** several agricultural sectors in Quebec are currently experiencing high levels of growth thanks to the trend of buying Quebec food products, from both local and non-local consumers;

**WHEREAS** agriculture and the agri-food sector play a key role in Quebec’s economic and social development;

**WHEREAS** local farmers demonstrate vitality along with a desire to be “part of the recipe” and to continue feeding Quebecers and contributing to Quebec’s development now more than ever;

**WHEREAS** the MAPAQ’s mission is to foster prosperity in Quebec’s bio-food sector and has a duty to be a leader and partner to the agricultural community in fulfilling this mission;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To make all representations necessary to ensure an agricultural plan is created to accompany the future Quebec bio-food policy (see appendix);

#### ➤ **The MAPAQ**

- To incorporate the recommendations from the agricultural plan in the forthcoming Quebec bio-food policy;

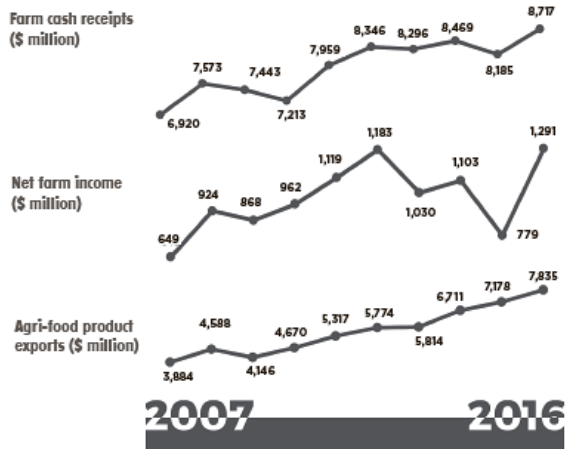
#### ➤ **The government of Quebec**

- To recognize the agricultural sector as being a strategic sector to Quebec’s economic development and to take this into account in developing any public policy involving farmers;
- To make available the budget needed to adequately meet the current and future needs of the agricultural sector.

# ANNEX

## THE TABLE IS SET IN QUEBEC

### THE MARKET IS FAVOURABLE



### DEVELOPMENT IS WITHIN REACH

Potential increase in production by 2025

**30%**



**+59,000 JOBS**  
**+5,7 BILLION IN GDP**  
**+1,2 BILLION IN TAX REVENUES**

A study conducted in 2016 on behalf of the UPA by ÉcoRessources estimated the growth potential of Quebec's agriculture sector at 30% over 10 years, for the 2015–2025 period.

Considering the large number of agricultural products processed in Quebec, this level of growth would generate significant economic spinoffs in terms of jobs, GDP, and tax revenues.

This level of growth will require significant investment and concerted effort in several areas:

- Market development
- Consumer expectations
- Adapted income security and risk management programs
- Investment assistance for business adaptation
- Protection against climate-related risks
- Start-up support
- Research and development
- Labour
- A regulatory environment that is favourable or fair with respect to the competition

## TOWARDS A QUEBEC BIO-FOOD POLICY

*The Union des producteurs agricoles presents:*

**An agricultural plan to address citizen expectations and reach sector development objectives**

The bio-food sector affects every person, every day. It deserves centre stage when it comes to societal concerns. Food is essential to life and has a direct effect on human health.

The outlook for Quebec agriculture and agri-food is bright. The sector creates wealth, strengthens the socioeconomic fabric in our regions, and makes use of land in dynamic ways.

To feed the world of tomorrow we will need every parcel of land available, both at home and abroad. Though climate change adds a new dimension to this challenge, Quebec has many assets that make it a strong contender to help in this worldwide task.

Agriculture is a mainstay of Quebec's economy. What's needed now is a set of concrete measures to support its long-term development. This is what we will be looking for when the Quebec government releases its bio-food policy in spring 2018.

When we support agricultural development, we are investing in the economy of Quebec and its regions.

**We are all part of the recipe**

**UPA** POUVOIR NOURRIR POUVOIR GRANDIR  
 L'Union des producteurs agricoles  
 Fall 2017

## TOWARDS A QUEBEC BIO-FOOD POLICY

An agricultural plan in response to the issues raised in the three preparatory meetings for the Food Summit



**OCTOBER 21, 2016:** LISTENING TO THE CONSUMERS OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

### Local purchasing

- Adopt a local food purchasing policy for the institutional sector
- Increase the supply of Quebec products in grocery stores
- Help consumers make informed food choices by prioritizing Aliments du Québec labelling
- Develop local markets and short food supply chains as per objectives in agricultural zone development plans (PDZA)

### Food safety and traceability

- Support the development of farm-to-fork food traceability systems and quality insurance programs

### Sustainable development

- Protect resources through joint agri-environmental action plans and ensure animal welfare is respected
- Increase investment to develop organic production



**MAY 26, 2017:** OPPORTUNITIES FOR AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURS AND FISHERS

### On-farm investment

- In response to societal expectations, support businesses as they adapt to environmental and animal-welfare changes.

**!** In 2014, the income security working group (a joint body of the UPA, the FADQ, and the MAPAQ) did a needs assessment on transitioning to organic, animal welfare, start-ups, and achieving profitability in certain sectors. The needs were estimated at \$250 million over 5 years.

### Smart regulations

- Prepare a concerted environmental action plan over a 10-year time horizon with a focus on:
  - Knowledge transfer and farmer coaching
  - Collaboration between community partners, farmers, and government bodies

- Reduce administrative constraints
- Recognize the ecological goods and services that farmers provide

**!** The UPA is calling for a collaborative approach among community actors to make concrete progress on the ground (non-point-source pollution reduction, wetland protection, coexistence, plant protection, climate change).

### Risk management

- Enhance existing programs to accommodate specific regional features, different business types, and young farmers' needs
- Ensure supply management systems continue

### Land protection and access

- Protect farming activities (immunity for legitimate activities)
- Mitigate land grabbing
- Adopt measures to lift the moratorium on increasing land under cultivation
- Create a fair property tax system for agriculture and forestry
- Support the implementation of PDZAs

**!** We cannot allow farmland to fall into the hands of a few individuals or investment funds with speculative aims.



**FEBRUARY 10, 2017:** DEVELOPING THE MARKET POTENTIAL OF QUEBEC'S FOOD INDUSTRY

### Sector development

- Adopt policy to support the development of emerging and established production sectors

- Enhance industry strategies:
  - Increase research and innovation budgets
  - Support labour force training
  - Support business modernization
  - Open market access at home and abroad

- Promote and defend collective marketing

**!** Research efforts are currently not well coordinated, while a number of topics require similar study and analysis.

We propose that existing centres of expertise and knowledge transfer be used to create collaborative spaces that bring together researchers, advisors, and farmers, thus increasing cohesion among applied research and adaptation projects

**!** Developing the sector also depends on promoting professions within the industry, including support for industry labour committees.



**UPA** POUVOIR NOURRIR  
POUVOIR GRANDIR  
L'Union des producteurs agricoles

## 2. FUNDING BY AND FOR ALL FARMERS

**WHEREAS** the UPA unites and represents all farmers;

**WHEREAS** UPA funding is dependent on assessments for all farmers and contributions that reflect the production volume of these agricultural businesses;

**WHEREAS** the UPA's current funding is currently composed of approximately 60 percent assessments and 40 percent contributions;

**WHEREAS** the contributions are collected only for production sectors for which joint plans exist;

**WHEREAS** over many years, several resolutions have urged the UPA to ensure equal participation from all members in funding it;

**WHEREAS** a new UPA funding plan for 2019–2024 will be adopted at the General Congress in December 2018;

**WHEREAS** the *Farm Producers Act* stipulates that the organization can charge farms a single or double assessment, depending their legal structure;

**WHEREAS** consideration of other parameters would allow for greater flexibility in determining assessment amounts;

**WHEREAS** the UPA has the option of charging different assessment rates, including ones based on business size, thus ensuring greater fairness;

### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

#### ➤ **The UPA**

- To implement a fair funding method by and for all farmers effective as of the next UPA funding plan;
- To initiate talks with the government of Quebec to amend paragraph 2 of section 31 of the *Farm Producers Act* concerning the parameters by which assessments are determined.

### **3. EXTENSION OF THE FUNDING PLAN**

**WHEREAS** the UPA's General Council hired an external consultant to audit the organization's efficiency and effectiveness;

**WHEREAS** the recommendations from this audit will influence the organization's funding;

**WHEREAS** these recommendations will be discussed in consultations over the course of 2018;

**WHEREAS** the funding plan expired on July 31, 2017;

**WHEREAS** it is important to maintain the current level of funding in the industry as a whole until the adoption of the next funding plan;

**WHEREAS** the General Council, in its meeting on May 24 and 25, 2017, adopted a unanimous recommendation on how the funding plan should be extended;

#### **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE GENERAL CONGRESS URGES:**

##### **➤ The UPA**

- To increase individual assessments by \$10 (\$20 for double assessments) on January 1, 2018, and to increase individual assessments by a further \$10 (\$20 for double assessments) starting on January 1, 2019;
- To increase the global budget envelope from contributions by 3 percent as of August 1, 2018;
- To maintain the same parameters for redistributing funds among levels of the organization (local syndicates, regional federations, the Confederation);
- To present the December 2018 General Congress with a new funding plan that incorporates the recommendations coming out of the MCE Conseil audit consultations.



## Union Fundamentals and Directions 2015-2017

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