



ASSOCIATION OF
EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS

AGRICULTURE
CONSTRUCTION
FORESTRY
MINING
UTILITY

Broadband Connectivity in Rural Canada Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology

February 9, 2018

The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) welcomes the opportunity to provide comments to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology related to Broadband Connectivity in Rural Canada. AEM supports efforts to expand rural wireless connectivity to support the needs of production agriculture. Canada's agricultural competitiveness depends on the increased and enhanced broadband services to cropland and rangeland in rural communities.

We seek to unite the agricultural equipment and technology industries to increase agricultural productivity; rural broadband is a key factor in enabling Canadian farmers to use the latest technology.

Innovative technologies integrated into farm equipment have helped increase agricultural productivity while making the industry more sustainable than ever. The proliferation of rural broadband technology helps sophisticated farm machinery communicate seamlessly with other farm technologies, and innovations in machinery itself, like precision agriculture technology, have revolutionized the way farmers, the customers of farm equipment, do their work.

In a business like farming, hours and minutes can be the difference between success and failure. Affordable and reliable broadband access creates opportunities for exponential growth in productivity. Right now, rural broadband deployment across the country does not meet the needs of production in agriculture, in particular farm machinery. Instead of hand delivering data from farm sites to agronomy experts, farmers need to be able to send data instantly.

Canadian corn farmers are capturing one kilobyte of data per year for every seed that is planted. That may not seem like much at first. But when you consider that a typical acre of corn has about 35,000 plants, this means that every acre is producing about 35 megabytes of data annually.

World Exchange Plaza
Suite 700 – 45 O'Connor Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A4

T 613.566.4568
F 613.566.2026

HEADQUARTERS: MILWAUKEE, WI
OFFICES: WASHINGTON, DC OTTAWA, CANADA BEIJING, CHINA
EUROPEAN RESOURCE: BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

WWW.AEM.ORG
AEM@AEM.ORG
Toll Free: 866.AEM.0442

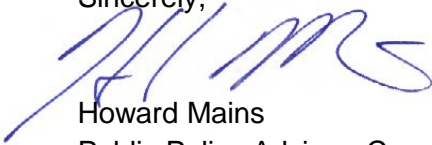
According to an Ontario Federation of Agriculture survey, more than 50 percent of Ontario farmers believed better internet access would boost their bottom line by opening opportunities for domestics and international markets, keeping pace with new innovations, technology and overall competitiveness.

Moreover, Canadian cities that feature reliable, high-volume broadband service have proven themselves to be leaders in our Canadian communities, seeking investment from new, advanced manufacturing facilities, thereby fostering innovation. But even as many farms increasingly resemble manufacturing operations, their decentralized, rural nature and the resulting poor access to broadband jeopardize the productivity gains they stand to reap.

Because farm equipment works seamlessly across the Canadian-American border, it is important to note that American lawmakers recently introduced the [Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act of 2018](#), which is a milestone piece of legislation that will help to revolutionize farming in the United States. AEM applauds these efforts, and wish to see similar priorities in Canada.

We appreciate your consideration of our submission to the Standing Committee and we look forward to continued collaboration on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Mains', is written over the typed name.

Howard Mains
Public Policy Advisor, Canada

About the Association of Equipment Manufacturers

The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) represents over 950 members, and over 200 product lines in agriculture, construction, mining, forestry and utilities.

The equipment manufacturing industry makes a significant economic contribution in Canada, where it supports about 149,000 total jobs – more than 64,000 people directly employed by industries involved in the production of off-highway equipment and another 84,000 jobs associated with the industry's supply chain and the income effects of the direct and indirect employment. In total, nearly \$34 billion in sales activity is generated or supported by the industry, which add nearly \$15 billion to Canada's GDP.¹

¹ All Canadian impact results are shown in US dollars.