

**Standing Committee on Agriculture
and Agri-Food**



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

**Comité permanent de l'agriculture et
de l'agroalimentaire**

Ottawa, June 23, 2017

The Honourable Navdeep Singh Bains
Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development
Dominion Square Building
1255 Peel Street, Suite 900
Montréal, Quebec
H3B 2T9

Dear Minister Bains:

On June 9, 2016, I wrote to you and to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, asking you to urgently implement a financial protection program for produce growers facing bankruptcy, based on a model proposed by the horticultural industry and presented to the House of Commons Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. This letter followed a series of public hearings held by the Committee to examine possible solutions for re-establishing Canada's preferential access to payment protection under the U.S. *Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act* (PACA).

The Committee has not yet received your response and has asked me to contact you for clarification. The Committee would like to know what progress has been made in developing this financial protection program for produce growers and whether it will be implemented in the near future. The Committee would also like to know whether implementation of this initiative is your responsibility or that of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

In October 2014, the U.S. revoked Canada's preferential access to payment protection under PACA in due to the absence in Canada of a similar program to protect fruit and vegetable producers in the event of non-payment by purchasers. Implementing a financial protection program for produce growers in the event of

buyer bankruptcy would enable Canada to regain that preferential access. This issue is of particular importance to Canadian horticultural producers, who no longer enjoy adequate financial protection when exporting to the United States.

The Committee awaits your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrice Finnigan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Patrice Finnigan, MP

Chair of the House of Commons Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

Encl.: Letter of June 9, 2016

cc: Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food