

9 October 2019

Dear Shannon,

Thank you for writing, for providing us with the opportunity to speak to your association and share the Green Party of Canada's platform, and for your advocacy. Please find our response below.

Best regards,

Kat Lorimer
Policy Researcher
Green Party of Canada

Financial Protection for Produce Sellers

1. Should you be elected, will your party commit to protecting Canadian produce sellers by creating a bankruptcy insolvency tool in the form of a deemed trust in Canada?
2. Will your party commit to working with your U.S. counterparts to restore this non-regulatory reciprocal arrangement thereby reinstating Canadian shippers' preferential access to the U.S. PACA Trust?

Yes. A Green government will review the findings of the House Agriculture and Agri-Food Committee and the House Finance Committee and pursue a PACA-like deemed trust and reciprocal bankruptcy insolvency tool to protect Canadian produce sellers.

Labour

3. Will your party commit to implementing a Trusted Employer program to facilitate expanded and more efficacious access to foreign labour, and will your party commit to expanding the definition of primary agriculture to allow for access to the Ag Stream of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program for pack houses that do not have an on-farm operation?

The Green Party of Canada knows that many Canadian farmers rely on the TFWP to address farm labour shortages and keep their businesses running. However, we believe that the TFWP

has not sufficiently addressed the need for additional farm labour, and that it can be misused to the disadvantage of both Canadian and foreign labourers. The 2017 Auditor General's report confirmed that the program suffers from a lack of adequate oversight and that employers — not just in the agriculture industry but across all sectors — frequently use the TFWP instead of hiring qualified Canadian workers.

Reform is required to meet the needs of the Canadian agricultural sector while ensuring a fair and equitable environment for Canadian and foreign workers. The Green Party of Canada supports replacing the TFWP with an expanded immigration category for permanent residents. This will resolve the shortage while allowing seasonal foreign workers to have access to equal labour rights, adequate protections from abuse and unsafe working environments, and a pathway to citizenship.

Plastics

4. Should your party form government, will you commit to working with industry to find a science-based approach and solution to mitigate the use of unnecessary and problematic plastics in Canada's food system that is aligned with provincial and territorial efforts?

Greens believe that all policy decisions should be grounded in science-based evidence. We are committed to working with industry to find solutions to plastic packaging. In consultation with food distributors and sellers, Greens will set 2022 reusable and refillable packaging targets for supermarkets and other food stores. For more on how we will collaborate with provinces and territories, please refer to our answer in question 15.

5. What is your party's position on unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging and how will you address the collection, design and reduction of these plastics in Canada?

Greens will establish a plastics lifecycle advisory group, comprising representatives from all sectors in the lifecycle of plastic products, scientists, and federal and provincial government representatives, to provide guidance and recommendations in establishing plastics biodegradability, recyclability and sustainability standards.

By January 2022, Greens will ban the production, distribution and sale of all unnecessary or non-essential petroleum-based single-use plastics, including: carry-out and produce bags, balloons, straws, plates, cups, lids, cutlery, cotton buds, drink stirrers, cigarette filters, and plastic water bottles (less than four litres); packaging, including multilayer packaging, packing straps, all multipack rings, takeaway packaging, and all expanded polystyrene (styrofoam) packaging; and all single-use plastics that are not easily recyclable or have additives that make them non-recyclable, including thermoset plastics.

Data and Innovation

6. Will your party commit to the expansion of data collection, analysis and delivery to industry by the federal departments who are stakeholders in this area?

The Green Party is happy to work with industry, stakeholders, and government departments to expand data collection on agriculture.

7. What is your party's policy on enabling small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the fresh produce industry to access innovation funding? What funding will you make available to SMEs across the fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain?

As mentioned in the next section, the Green Party will fund research and extend support for farmers shifting from conventional to organic and regenerative farming systems. We will invest \$2.5 million per year into a land and quota trust program and farming apprenticeship programs to expand local small-scale agriculture and help new farmers get started. Local innovation will also be driven by re-establishing the infrastructure for local food production in canneries, slaughterhouses and other value-added food processing. We will also fund innovation by dedicating \$5 million per year to develop a national food waste strategy.

Crop Protection

8. Will your party work towards harmonization and commit to having the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) work with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a joint schedule for pesticide re-evaluations of older chemistries?

A Green government will work to strengthen Canada's pesticide regulations, product approvals and residue limits up to the most rigorous levels to become the global gold standard as Canadians and many of our trading partners demand and expect.

9. Will your party commit to harmonize maximum residue limits (MRLs) between Canada, the US and other trading partners?

A Green government will work to set the global gold standard for pesticide regulation and will expect the US and other trading partners to meet our high standard.

10. Will your party commit to fulfilling PMRA Regulatory Directive DIR 98-02 to further regulatory harmonization by considering chemistry reviews by the EPA as acceptable to MRLs here in Canada?

A Green government will work to ensure that we uphold our responsibility and maintain our capability to protect Canadians through ensuring chemistry reviews that are conducted independently of industry and which, once patented, are transparent, replicable and peer reviewed.

11. Will your party commit to continued funding to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Minor Use Program and harmonize the Minor Use Program and the US IR-4 program which will allow for the acceptance of US registrations in Canada for minor use crops?

A Green government will require a more rigorous and independent science data package and will work to make Canadian pesticide standards the global gold standard.

12. Will your party commit to improved efficiencies in PMRA and remove impediments to the introduction of newer, safer, more effective crop protection products?

A Green Government commits to strengthening pesticide control regulations to ensure that safety claims are adequate and are based on transparent, replicable, peer reviewed science. We will review previously approved crop protection products and application protocols to ensure that they meet the high standards that Canadians and many of Canada's trading partners demand.

Trade

13. Should you be elected, how will your government ensure greater market access for fresh produce commodities, including in countries such as China?

To start, Greens will set a target to replace a third of Canada's food imports with domestic production, opening up market access within Canada, returning 15 billion food dollars back into our economy. We will also continue trade relationships already established.

14. Will your party endorse a North American perimeter approach to trade, including for inspections, plant health and crop protection?

A Green government is willing to work with our trade partners in North America to facilitate the sale of fresh produce.

15. Is your party committed to ensuring FPT regulatory alignment? If so, what is your plan to achieve greater regulatory alignment across the country?



A Green government will support the model of collaborative federalism, working with and ensuring fair treatment for provinces, territories, municipalities and Indigenous Peoples by establishing a Council of Canadian Governments to set higher order policy priorities, with the goal of policy coherence to optimize public spending. It would include the federal government, provincial/territorial governments, representatives of the local order of government with large city mayors and smaller and rural municipalities, and Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) governments. This is similar to one in place in Australia. The Council of Canadian governments will work to ensure that regulations for fresh produce are aligned across the country.

Finance and Taxation

16. Will your party commit to increasing the federal and capital asset limits to 2019 levels, accounting for inflation, and tying both limits to increase annually at the rate of inflation?

The Green Party is committed to helping small businesses, and thus will be keeping the small business tax at its current level. We are willing to examine other ways to aid small businesses, including tying the Small Business Deduction to the annual rate of inflation.

The Green Party will also restructure Canada's Business Risk Management Programs to help farmers cope with climate risk, which will help protect small businesses from natural disasters that might ruin a production year.

National Food Policy Council

17. Is your party committed to implementing and funding the announced National Food Policy Advisory Council and ensure multi-stakeholder participation?

Yes, the Green Party will implement and fund the National Food Policy Advisory Council and ensure multi-stakeholder participation.

18. What is your party's position on the development of a national school food program as part of Canada's National Food Policy?

The Green Party supports measures to increase access to healthy food, including the development of a national school lunch program.

Spring Weight Restrictions

19. Will you commit to taking a leadership role in working with the provinces and territories to harmonize spring weight restrictions on highways, including an exemption to these restrictions for the fresh produce industry, as has been done for other sectors?



As previously mentioned in question 15, Greens will establish a Council of Canadian Governments to set policy priorities across Canada. We are happy to look into providing exemptions to the produce industry to those already in place for similar producers.

That being said, the Green Party will also work independently to expand other options for produce transportation, including infrastructure funding for enhanced rail connections between rural producers and urban hubs.

