

Canada's new government reaffirms commitment to replace CAIS

I've been kicking around federal politics for 13 years now, so it shouldn't surprise me when a headline for a newspaper story doesn't mesh with the facts. Often it doesn't even match the story underneath it, and if people bother to read the entire article or do a little digging for the truth, they would roll their eyes at the obvious attempt to simply sell a newspaper. Such was the case with CP's headline "Unpopular farm program can't be scrapped as promised: Tories".

The program they're referring to, of course, is Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization, or CAIS. When CAIS was brought in by the federal Liberals they simply ignored warnings about its obvious failings: impossible to understand applications, limited access to negative margin coverage, not responsive to disasters, a hopeless 'inventory valuation' system, no internet or computer access for applicants, an aggressive 'clawback' that gave with one hand and took away with the other. Some farmers were waiting a year for an expected payment. Worst of all, nobody – not farmers, accountants, bankers, or even bureaucrats – could understand or predict what the payout would be for deserving producers. It truly was the ugly duckling of farm programs: nobody wanted it, and nobody loved it.

After the election, fixing some of these problems was obviously a priority. Our campaign promise was to replace CAIS with separate income stabilization and disaster programs. That's exactly where we're headed. We started by committing \$900 million to fix the inventory valuation system, and made it retroactive to the start of the program

in 2003. Cheques as a result of this change will begin going out this fall. The provinces and territories agreed to help fund changes to the negative margins (coverage for farmers who have higher expenses than income in a given year), so that put another \$80 million into the mix. We



commentary

Chuck Strahl

Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food
Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board

started the disaster relief discussion by helping flooded farmers with a \$50 million cover crop protection program (outside of CAIS), and we are committed to developing a federal/provincial/territorial plan for broader disaster assistance.

This is all in addition to accelerating delivery of the \$755 million payout to grains and oilseeds producers. And while all of these changes will put money in farmers' pockets by the end of the year, I also placed a moratorium on the clawbacks that were driving farmers and their accountants crazy. I've been getting advice from farmers and their associations about what works and what doesn't in the entire medley of farm programming, we're working toward new performance standards for programs, and more changes are in the works.

The Agriculture file is a complex one, and since it is shared with the provinces and territories, it is often not possible or wise to move unilaterally at the federal level. That's why we've held two federal/provincial/territorial agriculture ministers' meetings in the past seven months in an attempt to design better and more thorough programming for all farmers. At our last meeting in June, all Ministers agreed to move towards separating catastrophic disaster assistance from income stabilization. We're also working on improvements to Production Insurance and will roll out a biofuels opportunities program this fall. Further consultations on a replacement to the current federal/provincial/territorial Agricultural Policy Framework will begin soon, and farmers and their representatives will be involved.

We are absolutely committed to replacing CAIS with separate catastrophic disaster assistance and income stabilization programs that are responsive, predictable, bankable, and transparent for farmers. That's what we promised, and that's what we intend to deliver.

Assistance Plan

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A rural community health worker, Wagner adds, "The stress on the individual as well as the entire farm family is great. Where can they turn for help, both financial as well as emotional? AgResolve will validate these concerns and help farmers work through some personal crisis situations."

And there's no time to waste. Agriculture leaders say producers are facing withering stress from not only soaring costs and low commodity prices but long hours and family turmoil. With no immediate solutions on the horizon, experts warn that farmers need peer and professional support to head off an increase in suicides, domestic violence, addictions and stress-related ailments like high blood pressure and heart attacks.

"For a lot of farmers," wrote one respondent in the R.E.A.C.H. survey, "the crafter in the barn and the rope in the shop is becoming more appealing every day."

Another wrote, "It's a sad day when a farmer has a huge workload and a hopeless feeling for the future. I am a third generation family farmer and have had all my dreams and confidence drawn from me. What's the point anymore?"

In the same survey about 55 percent of respondents said they had trouble sleeping; 30 percent felt verbal-

ly or physically aggressive; 16 percent were taking more medication than usual; and almost 14 percent were drinking more.

"We're not under any illusions," says Gamble. "AgResolve isn't a magic solution. But farmers as a whole are innovative and persistent. We're confident they can use these tools effectively to enhance life for themselves and their families."

Essex County Farm Hiker Tour

The Essex County Federation of Agriculture's 13th Annual Farm Hiker Tour is scheduled for Sept. 17, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The tour has seven stops - from Amherstburg through Harrow along the shores of Lake Erie.

This is a free, self-guided

driving tour of farms and other agri food operations in Essex County.

This year there will be opportunities to see many kinds of horses - from the

large, beautiful Clydesdale to the quick, highly trained cutting horse as well as the many breeds of riding horses.

Maps, available at most

large grocery stores in Essex County, allow you to choose which site to visit first.

For more information, please call the ECFA office at (519) 776-5159.



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ESTATE AUCTION SALE
A PUBLIC AUCTION FOR THE ESTATE OF DR. ELEANOR GRANDSTAFF (A'burg) and OTHERS WILL BE HELD AT 357 QUEEN ST. (Walker Rd.) HARROW

SATURDAY, September 9th AT 9:30 A.M.

ANT. & COLL: 1904 Edison phonograph w/horn and over 40 cylinders, Grandfather clock, oak chest drawers, dining table, 4 pressed back chairs, rocker, fainting couch, wardrobe, spindle leg side and nin nac tables, dresser, book shelf, Morris chair, treadle sew machs, hump back trunks, leather top table and 2 chairs, wall mirror, oil chandelier, table and floor lamps, pine table, rock maple dbl. bed and dresser, dbl. bed, vanity w/mirror, chest drawers and nite stand, hat tree, lectern, cameras, canes, crocks, quilt tops, tall ships, fire engine pedal car, coll. of radio cars, kid's wagon, coll. of dolls, Gibson 5 string and tenor banjos, records, books, cast school desks, Royal Chelsea, Myott and Meakin dinnerware, Paragon and more cups and saucers, McCoy tea pot, Limoges, Bavarian, Czech, Noritake and more china, Victoria Jubilee and other Royal Plates, cups and tins, 12 plc. set scale and much much more. **MODERN AND MISC:** Fridge, elect. stove, washer, dryers, micro, water cooler, maple dining table and 4 chairs, sofa recliner, end and coffee tables, rocker, Grandmother clock, king cannonball bed frame, chest drawers, dressers, desks, bookcases, corner cupboard, dec. room divider, wall units, sm. deacon bench, 4 and 2 drawer file cabs., dehumidifier, TVs, VCR, stereo unit, Durst enlarger, projects, sewing machs., Tiffany type table lamps, area rugs, handicap battery scooter, window fans, air conditioners, sm. kit. appliances, pots, pans, dishes, etc., metal cupboard and shelving alum. and wood ladders, lawn furniture, sm. rototiller, lawn sweeper and roller, gas weed trimmer, rotary mower, J. Deere Sabre 17 h.p. hydrostatic drive 42" cut w/bagger, Dakota step bumper, mini van trailer hitch, car engine stand, 91 Tracker vinyl top and much more. **PREVIEW** Fri. 5-7 p.m. or Sat. 8:30. Cash - Approved Cheque - Visa and M/C.

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AUCTION SALE

Saturday, September 9th at 9:00 A.M.

At Lakeside Pavilion, Kingsville

Note: If parking lot is full, please park on Division Road.

We will be selling the balance of the items of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary plus an Estate from Chatham and Essex

TO BE SOLD AT 12:00 NOON, ESTATE VEHICLE: 2000 Chevy Malibu LS, 4-door, 6 cylinder, leather interior, loaded with sunroof, 24,650 km.

Estate Jewelry: 18 carat white gold wedding ring with 1.1 carat diamond app. \$14,000.00. Several other ladies diamond rings, etc.

Furniture: Victorian walnut umbrella stand, oak stacking bookcase, round oak dining room table and 6 claw foot chairs. Oak sideboard with roosters on doors, Andrew Malcolm server, quantity of side chairs, breakfront china cabinet, painted Chatham cupboard, etc.

CLOCK COLLECTION: 52 inch 2-weight Gustave Becker Regulator wall clock, 45 inch 3-weight Gustave Becker Regulator wall clock, 3-piece French clock set and many other clocks.

Large quantity of Glassware and China: Rookwood vase, R.S. Prussia, Roseville, carnival, Weller, Cranberry, Blue Epergne. Set of Royal Doulton china. **Limited Edition Royal Doulton Commemorative Busto of Mounties HN 2555** and other Doultons. Beswick horse with Mounty and Beswick horse with Indian, 33 pieces of jadeite, Moorcroft, Waterford crystal, Belleek, Limoges, quantity of cups and saucers, etc.

Collectibles: collection of crocks, Jug signed "The Girardo Wine Co. Sandwich, Ontario", W.E. Welding and Welding & Belding brown crocks, 2 old percussion rifles as is, chocolate molds, milk bottles, Kiwi shoe polish display, sewing collectibles, 6 wall sconces, quilts, 4 wooden decoys, pig weathervane, etc.

Miscellaneous: early etchings, 7 Avanti mini fridges, several T.V.'s, large amount of fabric **and much more!**

STARTING AT 9:00 A.M. WITH LARGE QUANTITY OF BOX LOTS, SECOND AUCTIONEER AT 9:30



Viewing Saturday from 8:00 A.M.

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