

Minister
of Agriculture and
Agri-Food



Ministre
de l'Agriculture et de
l'Agroalimentaire

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0C5

Quote: 267466

November 22, 2021

Ms. Patricia Leson
President
National Council of Women of Canada
PO Box 67099
Ottawa ON K2A 4E4

Dear Ms. Leson:

Thank you for your letter, co-addressed to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, regarding pesticide residue levels and genetically modified crops.

The registration and regulation of pesticides in Canada falls under the responsibility of Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), under the authority of the *Pest Control Products Act*. Through its Pest Management Centre (PMC), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is committed to developing and implementing newer and effective alternative pest management tools and technologies. The Pesticide Risk Reduction Program, which is jointly facilitated by PMRA and PMC, is working to establish strategies to reduce risks associated with pesticide use and the adoption of integrated pest management strategies. In addition, the PMC's Minor Use Pesticide Program supports the organic sector through its commitment to two projects annually to address solutions for priority pests impacting organic production.

The Government of Canada recognizes the vital importance of a resilient agriculture and agri-food sector that supports biodiversity and adapts efficiently to climate change. Therefore, the Government is committed to helping our producers and food processors be part of the climate solution by investing in initiatives and projects that improve their resilience to climate change and promote the adoption of environmentally beneficial practices.

For example, in March 2021, the Government announced the \$185-million, 10-year Agricultural Climate Solutions program, which will help bring together producers, scientists and others to co-develop, test and monitor new climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices and technologies. In addition, Budget 2021 announcements included a \$200-million investment

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in agricultural climate solutions for on-farm climate action. Under the five-year Canadian Agricultural Partnership, up to \$690 million in federal programs is available to enhance the competitiveness of the sector through research, science and innovation, with an emphasis on environmental sustainability and clean growth.

Nature-based—including organic—systems employ responsible production practices. AAFC has invested significantly in organic science and, in partnership with the organic industry, continues to explore and identify best practices for sustainability and growth. Currently, the Department is investing more than \$19 million in five national organic-specific initiatives to ensure the development and growth of the industry, including linking environmental sustainability to the science of organic production.

In recognition of the value of the organic industry to Canada, AAFC has also supported the development and maintenance of the Canada Organic Standards. These investments underpin the Canada Organic Regime and have helped ensure Canada's organic industry stays up to date with the latest food production technologies and practices.

Pesticides fall under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Health. As you have also sent your letter to Health Canada, I am certain my colleague will give your concerns every consideration.

Again, thank you for writing on this matter.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, PC, MP

c.c.: The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, MD, PC, MP
The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, PC, MP