

LETTERHEAD OF YOUR AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

(Date)

Mr./Mrs./Ms \_\_\_\_\_, MPP

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Re: Harmonized Sales Tax – Agricultural Societies

The Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies represents over 220 incorporated, not-for-profit Agricultural Societies in Ontario, many of which were in existence prior to 1900, and most of which have charitable tax status. The \_\_\_\_\_ Agricultural Society has operated the \_\_\_\_\_ Fair since \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Fair is governed and managed mostly by volunteers, and draws a large public attendance from members of our community and beyond.

The Fair and Exhibition industry provides unique opportunities for public competitions in a wide variety of events from baking to field crops to livestock to children's pets. They also provide a forum for other agricultural-based organizations such as Junior Farmers and 4H Ontario to showcase their ability and knowledge. In addition, Ontario Fairs and Exhibitions offer a proven tourist attraction in over 220 communities across the Province, providing tremendous economic benefits in those communities, and for Ontario tourism in general.

We believe that the introduction of a Harmonized Sales Tax in Ontario will place an enormous burden on us in our efforts to educate, promote and communicate the importance of agriculture in Ontario to our community. Our Fair will be adversely affected through an increase in costs of all components of the annual Fair, from plumbers and electricians to midway and entertainment providers.

We believe that the introduction of this new tax will be detrimental to small town Ontario in general and specifically the Agricultural Fair industry. It would be tragic if the HST causes the end of small town fairs as they are known today.

Currently in Ontario, admissions to events held or sponsored by an Agricultural Society during an agricultural fair are exempt from Retail Sales Tax. We request assurance and confirmation from your office that this exemption will continue to be in effect after the introduction of HST in Ontario.

Further, we respectfully suggest that the Agricultural Societies should be granted a further exemption from paying the Retail Sales Tax portion of the HST to their suppliers.

Your consideration of these requests is much appreciated. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you or members of your staff at your convenience. We look forward to hearing from you in these matters.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
President - \_\_\_\_\_ Agricultural Society