



Federal government must support Nova Scotia farmers

August 5, 2010 (Halifax) - The Liberal Party believes the federal government must do more to support Nova Scotia farmers and ensure Nova Scotians have access to healthy local foods, Halifax West MP Geoff Regan said today.

“A national food policy will put more healthy, homegrown food on Canadian plates, while at the same time giving a much-needed boost to Canada’s farming sector,” said Mr. Regan, who visited the Food for Health exhibit at Pier 21 on Thursday.

A recent report released by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and the Ecology Action Centre states that in 2008 only 13% of every dollar spent on food went to Nova Scotia’s farmers, as compared to 17% in 1997.

“This report is a red flag,” Mr. Regan noted. “It’s bad news for our farmers, our health and our environment.”

He added it’s time Ottawa recognizes this is a problem and takes concrete action to fix it.

He said that is the message Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff has delivered this week as he visited Atlantic communities to advocate for local farmers.

“For healthier Canadians, we need healthier foods,” Mr. Ignatieff said. “Canadian farmers produce the healthiest, safest, highest-quality foods in the world. We need more Canadian food, on more Canadian plates, which is what our National Food Policy will achieve – because both our health and our economy depend on it.”

The Liberal leader is advocating a new National Food Policy that includes an \$80-million Buy Local Fund to promote farmers markets and home-grown foods.

“Liberals are committed to working with provinces like Nova Scotia to create a competitive brand for Canadian foods to support our farmers and improve our health,” said Mr. Regan.

“We need to work together to make sure that more of the money we spend on food goes to local producers.”

He also encouraged people to learn more about local producers by visiting the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture's new website at www.meetyourfarmer.ca.

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