

## Dear Member of Parliament,

I have sent the following request to the Prime Minister. Please take action on it.  
Faced with hunger in many parts of the world, I believe that agricultural policies must be guided by the principles of food sovereignty. Hunger and poverty can be reduced by giving priority to small-scale farmers, to local food production for local markets, and to the needs of future generations.

Current agricultural policies that support industrial agriculture, especially those that promote agrofuels, threaten the food sovereignty of people in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Production of agrofuels causes population displacement and environmental problems. It also raises the price of food. It does not solve the growing problem of climate change or address the exhaustion of the world's oil supplies.

During the meeting of the G8 to be held in Canada in June 2010, I ask that you use your influence with other G8 members to ensure that these countries increase their support for small-scale, sustainable agriculture in the Global South. This must be given priority over industrial agriculture, especially that which focuses on agrofuels.

TEAR HERE. Mail this half to your Member of Parliament.

NO  
POSTAGE  
REQUIRED

*James Rajotte*

**Your Member of Parliament's name**  
**House of Commons**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**  
**K1A 0A9**



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## James Rajotte, MP

Edmonton—Leduc

Dear Constituent:

Thank you for recently sending me the postcard on Canada's foreign aid agricultural policies. I appreciate your concerns on this important issue, and I would like to provide some information on Canada's actions in this area.

Largely due to higher food prices, the United Nations' (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization estimated that the number of undernourished people in the world increased by 75 million in 2007 and 40 million in 2008. Today, the structural causes of food shortages remain: low investment in agricultural production; lack of farm credit; increased input costs; and an emphasis on cash crops for export. Compounding the situation, we also find ourselves in the midst of a very challenging economic time. Without an adequate food supply, sustainable development is impossible. That is why food security is a key thematic focus for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

In 2008, Canada was the third largest single country donor to the UN's World Food Programme. We have also recently untied all of our international food aid. Up to that point, half of Canada's food aid had to be bought in Canada. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), untying our food aid means that we can gain 30 to 35 per cent more efficiency. CIDA's food aid can now reach those who need it faster and at a lower cost, which supports local agricultural development in target countries.

On World Food Day in October 2009, the Honourable Bev Oda, Minister of International Cooperation, unveiled Canada's new Food Security Strategy (FSS). The FSS has three main areas of focus: sustainable agricultural development, food assistance and nutrition, and research and development.

### **Sustainable Agricultural Development**

- A doubling of all investments related to sustainable agricultural development, to \$1.2 billion over three years;
- Increasing rural smallholder farmers' access to agricultural technologies, knowledge, financial services, markets, land, water, and other natural resources;
- Doubling CIDA's contribution to the International Fund for Agricultural Development to \$75 million over three years;

- Supporting national and regional agriculture strategies and their implementation at all levels, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme; and
- Increasing Canadian leadership and expertise on joint donor-government agriculture groups.

### **Food Assistance and Nutrition**

- Supporting the efforts of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to meet the food-assistance needs of vulnerable populations in developing countries;
- Exploring innovative initiatives on food assistance and nutrition programming. For example, CIDA will contribute \$30 million to the UN WFP's Purchase for Progress program, which buys from local farmers;
- Working with other countries on continued improvements to the Food Aid Convention, including showing leadership by continuing to meet our national commitments;
- Working with multilateral organizations and national governments to increase micronutrient programming;
- Supporting national and regional strategies to incorporate nutrition considerations into broader food security initiatives; and
- Supporting and strengthening national and regional food reserves and food crisis alert and prevention systems.

### **Research and Innovation**

- Increasing CIDA's investment for research and innovation to broaden and deepen publicly available research that focuses on food security issues. For example:
  - CIDA will create, in partnership with the International Development Research Centre, the \$62 million, five-year Canadian International Food Security Research Fund.
  - CIDA will contribute \$32.5 million over three years in new funds to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research's Challenge Programs.
- Strengthening national and regional agricultural research systems, including enhanced extension services; and
- Ensuring that investments in research inform CIDA's and its development partners' future policies and programs related to food security.

CIDA's initiatives are designed to empower the poorest and most disadvantaged by reducing their vulnerability to various factors that impact their food security, including food shortages, market barriers, and constraints to agricultural productivity. The FSS includes short-, medium-, and long-term measures to increase agricultural development, provide more effective food assistance, promote nutrition as a key consideration in food security, and spur innovative and practical research. This strategy reflects CIDA's commitment to focus its programming where real results and benefits are possible.

Food insecurity is one of the most important — and preventable — obstacles to alleviating poverty. Canada has shown consistent leadership in responding to food security needs in the developing world. Over the next three years that the FSS is implemented, we will continue our commitment to those living in poverty so that they can have access to the level of nutritional and abundant food that we in Canada are so fortunate to enjoy.

I hope this information is helpful in addressing your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me in the future should you have any further questions on this or any other topic.

Yours truly,

James Rajotte, MP  
Edmonton-Leduc

JR/mb