



BOB BAILEY, MPP

NEWS RELEASE



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PC AMENDMENT TO CREATE TAX CREDIT FOR FARMERS DONATING TO FOOD BANKS PASSES

QUEEN'S PARK – Late Tuesday, the PC amendment to the *Local Food Act* that would create a tax credit for farmers who donate agricultural products to Ontario food banks and community food programs was passed at committee. The amendment was put forward by Bob Bailey, Sarnia-Lambton MPP, who had first introduced the proposal as a private members bill.

"I am thrilled that the committee amended the *Local Food Act* to create a tax credit for farmers who donate to local food banks and community food programs" said MPP Bailey. "This will help get more fresh local food to those who need it the most and ensure that the *Local Food Act* actually has an impact."

The PC amendment creates a non-refundable tax credit worth 25% of the current market value of the donated agricultural product to farmers who donate to a community food program, including a food bank. In order to be eligible the program must be run by a registered charity and must provide the food free of charge.

Reaction to the news of the committee amending the *Local Food Act* to include MPP Bailey's food bank donation initiative was high-spirited. "The adoption of Bob's farm credit bill into the local food act is a great day for food banks, food programs and especially those they serve," said Myles Vanni, Executive Director, of Sarnia's Inn of the Good Shepherd. "People living in poverty have a lower level of health and this is a direct result of lack of access to food, especially healthy food. Bob's bill corrects an imbalance and provides a tax credit to farmers for food they donate to food banks. Nobody knows better than a farmer how important healthy food is and farmers want to help but they can't always afford to donate. This tax credit will provide the means to help them donate. So much food is wasted in our system – this bill will help redistribute this food so it can reach those who need it most!"

Bill Laidlaw, Executive Director, of the Ontario Association of Food Banks added his organizations support for the measure, "Ontario needs a tax credit for Ontario farmers who donate to food banks. When farmers donate fresh, nutritious, local product to food banks, they do so out of generosity and a commitment to hunger relief. A tax credit would provide some compensation for the work that goes in to bringing this product to the tables of thousands of food bank clients. It is time to support farmers, and support food banks".

The *Local Food Act*, Premier Wynne's signature piece of legislation as acting Minister of Agriculture, will now return to the Legislative Assembly for a third and final vote by legislators.

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