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International Longshore and Warehouse Union

July 5, 2023

Subject: Potential Impact of Workers' Strike on Fruit and Vegetable Growers

Dear Sirs:

I am writing on behalf of the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada, an organization representing thousands of Canadian growers who contribute substantially to the economy and food security of our nation. Our collective concern is the potential impact of the ongoing workers' strike at the Port of Vancouver on our members and, by extension, the entire Canadian population.

The Port of Vancouver serves as a vital link in our operations, enabling the timely import of crucial resources such as seeds, fertilizers, and agricultural machinery essential for our domestic production. It is also instrumental in exporting our produce to global markets, which significantly contributes to Canada's economy. However, the ongoing labour disruptions threaten to derail our operations significantly.

The inherent perishability of fruits and vegetables necessitates swift and efficient transport. Any disruptions at the ports, such as the current strike, could cause extended dwell times and delivery delays, leading to potential spoilage of fresh produce. This situation not only results in substantial financial losses for our members but also affects the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables to Canadian consumers, thereby influencing overall food security.

Beyond the immediate repercussions, the prolonged strike could also disrupt our planting and harvesting schedules. The delayed arrival of essential inputs like seeds and machinery can adversely impact our production cycles, potentially leading to lower yields in the future. Such a scenario could have long-term impacts on the health and viability of our sector and the broader Canadian economy.

We urge the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada to consider the cascading effects of this disruption on various stakeholders, including our growers, and to work diligently towards a resolution.

We are confident in your ability to handle this situation with utmost urgency and efficacy, and we remain hopeful for a swift and mutually beneficial resolution to the strike. Ensuring the uninterrupted operation of the Port of Vancouver is crucial for our sector's sustainability, Canada's food security, and our national economy.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to a positive and quick resolution that can alleviate the concerns of all parties involved. Our industry's contribution to the Canadian economy is significant, with Canada exporting \$4.6 billion in fresh fruits and vegetables in 2021 and our industry directly employing around 145,000 people. It is, therefore, critical that any disruptions to our operations are minimized to ensure our produce can continue to reach households.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at rlee@fvgc.ca or by phone at 613-296-8383.

Warmly,



Rebecca Lee, PhD
Executive Director

The Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (FVGC) represents growers across the country involved in the production of over 120 different types of crops on over 14,000 farms, with a farm gate value of \$5.9 billion in 2021. FVGC is an Ottawa-based voluntary, not-for-profit, national association, and, since 1922, has advocated on important issues that impact Canada's fresh produce sector, promoting healthy, safe, and sustainable food, ensuring the continued success and growth of the industry.