



Prospective premier holds court with farmers

Actively campaigning for the Oct. 6 provincial election, PC leader Tim Hudak met in June with a group at VandenBosch Farms, including South Stormont Deputy Mayor Tammy Hart (beside the Tory leader), North Stormont Mayor Dennis Fife (sunglasses) and others.

Hudak campaign rolls into farm country

Nelson Zandbergen
AgriNews Staff Writer

CHESTERVILLE— THE TIM HUDAK CAMPAIGN ROLLED INTO LOCAL FARM COUNTRY ABOARD A BLUE MOTORHOME EMBLAZONED WITH THE ONTARIO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE LEADER'S FACE AND PARTY LOGO.

Hudak's June 10 stop at VandenBosch

Farms coincided with a meeting with local producers to talk about his agricultural platform in October's provincial election.

Accompanied by local Tory candidate Jim McDonell and Nepean-Carleton MPP Lisa MacLeod, Hudak laid out what he said was \$150-million in new program spending for Ontario agriculture, as well as other elements of PC agricultural policy

Continued on page 7

Hudak campaign rolls into EO's farm country

Continued from page 4

contained within four points inside the party's cleverly named "changebook."

The would-be premier began by highlighting his intent to establish a "one-window" policy for farmers and agribusinesses in their dealings with government, rather than contending with three or four different ministries and other agencies. The change would allow farmers to "be in the field, in the barn, not at the desk filling out paperwork," he said.

The PC's would also work to protect supply management within the dairy, egg and poultry sectors, he vowed, and would introduce a business risk management program, "based on cost of production," in the non-supply-managed commodities.

"Risk management is not only about peace of mind, it is about correcting a competitive imbalance that gives farmers in other jurisdictions an unfair market advantage. Our program will be based on the cost of production. And unlike the Liberals, our support will be predictable and permanent."

Hudak, who also emphasized the importance of agriculture in his own riding of Niagara West-Glanbrook, also pledged to have the province "lead by

example" through the purchase of Ontario food for provincial institutions — hospitals, prisons, schools and long-term care facilities.

During a question-and-answer session from individuals gathered a table in the sunshine, the PC leader received input and also tackled issues of red tape and bureaucracy. He clarified that the Ministry of Agriculture would serve as farmer's one window into the bureaucracy, even in matters that are now under the jurisdiction of local conservation authorities.

When asked how he would strip the conservation authorities of their power, he replied, "This is not going to be easy, but it's the right thing, and we are going to do it." Hudak added that he would accord the agriculture minister appropriate weight and respect at his cabinet table, empowering that person to make the necessary changes.

Asked by The Record about the case of Major Mark Tijssen of Carlsbad Springs, who faces an upcoming provincial offenses trial related to sharing 40 pounds of home-butchered pork with a neighbour, Hudak said it was his intent to form a government that doesn't treat people "like children."