

provide certain levels of support to the farmers who are facing crisis in Canada.

Although the concentration so far has been on grains and oilseeds, the resolution also refers to other horticultural producers. It is some of those other horticultural producers that I hope to speak about and bring to the House's attention. Although in Canada we have a concentration on the bread basket of Canada, being the prairie provinces, and our grains and oilseeds area, a very important sector of our community, we often have a tendency to forget that there are other pockets of agriculture and horticulture throughout Canada, areas such as the Okanagan, Similkameen, the Nicola Valley and Merritt area and the boundary country of which I am the representative. There are also areas in the Niagara Peninsula and Annapolis, fruit-growing areas of this country and the cattle areas of this country.

We know that the producers of grain on the prairies are hurting. This is in response to that. However, I am here to tell this House and the people of Canada that people in my area, the grape growers, the fruit growers, cattlemen and women, farmers of all stripes and descriptions are hurting. They are looking for help and guidance. They are tired of the bankrupt ideas of this government and governments of similar ilk who continue to tell them not only to make it on their own but continue to turn their backs on them in their time of need.

In my area we have just come through the second summer after the free trade agreement and have seen some of the problems it has created. It may perhaps be only a perceptual problem but a problem nevertheless. Last summer, for instance, the cherry growers in my area witnessed a massive dumping of product from the United States into Canada at well below production cost not only in Canada, but well below the production cost in the state of Washington. Although there was not that much of a benefit to the Washington growers, they perceived that because of the free trade agreement they had a new and open market. They gave benefits to their purchasers that the growers in Canada could not touch.

We witnessed toward the end of last summer and throughout the fall and winter acres of cherry trees being ripped out. This was just directly after, in my area, watching approximately 2,000 acres of vineyards being

ripped out as a result of the free trade agreement and GATT rulings.

Over the past year I personally have watched some young farmers, up and coming, advanced, enthusiastic farmers, losing their enthusiasm for the land. There is not a farmer out there who can make it on agriculture alone. Either he, she or the spouse has to go and find another job in order to try to make a little extra money to keep their families and pay for their mortgage. When you are a farmer, it becomes a labour of love as opposed to a way of making a living.

• (1710)

I have watched these young farmers not only lose their interest in the land but turning their backs on the land, letting the banks take it back or trying to sell it. That becomes a very great problem also, because right now it is often difficult to sell 10, 15 or 20 acres of orchard land because everybody knows you cannot make a living as a fruit farmer.

There are things this government must do. We must face up to the reality that we want to continue to be able to produce food in Canada. Most Canadians want to ensure that we have a viable agriculture industry. We have to look at short-term benefits for these farmers as set out in this motion, not just to the grain farmers, but to other farmers in Canada, the fruit farmers, the grape growers and the cattlemen.

Lately in the fruit farming area they have run into low prices. They have run into the usual things farmers can expect, inclement weather, massive destruction as a result of hail; low crops in some cases because of a late spring and a freeze-out of various crops or a very cold winter during which a number of farmers lost trees.

The farmer is told to get up to date on what is being sold. In British Columbia they were offered \$3,000 for each acre of replant, but it costs anywhere up to \$11,000 or \$12,000 an acre and they are told by the banks that they are not good risks. Well, where do they come up with the money to improve their lot, to ensure that they have a product that meets the needs of the market?

I spoke recently to a farmer from Oliver, B.C., and he told me how he has over the last little while diversified into a number of different apple crops in order to get a higher price. But the cost of that is enormous.