



Quote: 272499

Mr. Chad MacPherson  
General Manager  
Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association  
Box 4752  
Regina SK S4P 3Y4

Dear Mr. MacPherson:

I am writing in response to your correspondence to the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau in which you share resolutions that were introduced at the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association's 109th Convention and Annual General Meeting that took place last month. Please be assured that your comments have been brought to the attention of the Minister, and I appreciate the opportunity to convey to you the following information.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is committed to working with the cattle industry to increase profitability and sustainability. The Government commends your organization for working to advance the interests of Saskatchewan cattle producers, and I appreciate the opportunity to address resolutions #5, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #17, #19 and #21, which raise issues of federal responsibility that are of relevance to AAFC.

Resolution #5 mentions including damage to stockpiled forage as an eligible loss under the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation's (SCIC) Wildlife Damage Program (WDP). Compensation is currently payable for wildlife damage to stacked hay, silage and bales. Unstacked hay left in field is not covered. Compensation is also payable for damage to market gardens, tree nurseries, fruit trees, sod farms, honey and leaf cutter bees, including their structures. Provincial AgriInsurance delivery agents regularly evaluate the WDP, along with possible mitigation measures, and consult with industry groups to update existing programs or introduce new ones. The SCIC should be contacted directly to discuss how the WDP could be adjusted to best suit the needs of producers. The Corporation can be reached at 1-888-935-0000.

Resolution #7 mentions increased irrigation projects and usage. The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of irrigation projects and sees the potential increased economic opportunities that could be unlocked with the expansion of irrigated lands in Saskatchewan.

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Minsiter Bibeau continues to collaborate with the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, on their shared mandate commitment to create a new Canada Water Agency to find the best ways to keep our water safe, clean and well managed. Budget 2022 included \$88.1 million over five years in new funding to Environment and Climate Change Canada to sustain the Freshwater Action Plan and to create a new Canada Water Agency. In addition, irrigation projects have been identified as one of the five major investment initiatives through the Canada Infrastructure Bank's Growth Plan, with \$1.5 billion available to help the agriculture sector enhance production, strengthen the country's food security and expand export opportunities. I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your letter to the Office of the Honourable Dominc LeBlanc, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, for consideration.

Resolution #8 requests a review of the minimum gross revenue eligibility threshold to qualify for funding through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP). Similar to the resolution above, in order to determine the possibility of changing the eligibility threshold for these provincially administered programs, please contact the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture by telephone at 1-866-457-2377 or by email at [aginfo@gov.sk.ca](mailto:aginfo@gov.sk.ca).

Resolution #9 requests funding for incremental printing costs for manifests as a result of recently introduced regulations. Part XII of the *Health of Animals Regulations* requires that transporters keep records and that a Transfer of Care (TOC) document be provided when animals are delivered at an assembly centre or abattoir. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is aware that Saskatchewan has requirements for livestock manifests to accompany livestock moving to auction markets or abattoirs, and it took this into consideration when amending the Regulations. A committee was organized in Saskatchewan in late 2020 to review and update the Saskatchewan livestock manifest to ensure alignment with the Regulations. The committee included members from national and provincial industry organizations as well as provincial and federal governments. The committee met over the course of several months before a final draft was agreed upon and shared for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's approval. The updated manifest included fields to meet the requirements with regards to the TOC and recordkeeping of Part XII of the Regulations. There is not yet an electronic format for this livestock manifest, and the information to be provided requires a small amount of additional space on the existing paper form. As a result, a longer paper may be required. The format of the TOC document is left up to the regulated parties. They may use existing forms and information and share the document via email, text message or any other means allowing it to be retrieved if needed.

Resolution #10 is in regard to front-of-package labelling for ground beef. As you are aware, on June 30, 2022, Health Canada announced a technical exemption from the front-of-package nutrition symbol for raw, single-ingredient ground meats and poultry. Health Canada stated that requiring a symbol on ground meats and poultry and not on whole cuts of meat may lead Canadians to erroneously believe that all whole cuts are healthier than ground meats.

Resolution #11 concerns the continuation of the Johne's Disease Surveillance Program in the next policy framework, now known as the Sustainable Agricultural Partnership (SCAP). Under CAP, the current partnership, provinces and territories designed cost-shared programs to meet regional needs. The Government of Saskatchewan is in the process of negotiating programming for the SCAP. To discuss the possible continuation of the Program, please contact the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.

Resolution #12 mentions making it easier to have irrigation projects put in place in a timely manner. Under CAP, provinces and territories have the flexibility to design and deliver cost-shared programs that meet regional needs. Saskatchewan's cost-shared programming under CAP includes the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program, which provides support to producers and agri-businesses to develop secure and sustainable water sources. To discuss the process for timely implementation of irrigation projects in Saskatchewan, either under CAP or SCAP, please contact the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. For more information, you may also visit the Government of Saskatchewan's [Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#) webpage.

Resolution #17 requests compensation to cover the loss of production due to Richardson's ground squirrels. Under the SCIC's WDP, compensation is payable for field and forage crop damage due to gophers with the condition that the producer has made every reasonable effort to use prevention measures to control damage caused by wildlife. Richardson's ground squirrel is not currently listed as an eligible species. According to the Government of Saskatchewan's website, in spring 2022, the Ministry of Agriculture conducted an evaluation in the efficacy of strychnine and some registered alternatives for control of Richardson's ground squirrels. The results indicated that the zinc phosphide products were as effective as strychnine and less expensive. In addition, they also presented a reduced risk of secondary poisoning and are not environmentally persistent. I invite you to consult the provincial government's [Control of Richardson's Ground Squirrel](#) webpage for more information. As the administrator of the WDP, the SCIC should be contacted directly to discuss any adjustments to the list of eligible species and prevention measures to control wildlife damage.

Resolution #19 pertains to the development of programs to value the ecological goods and services that grasslands provide. AAFC recognizes that grasslands, including grazing pastures and hay lands, provide important ecological goods and services, as they help regulate the flow and quality of water, protect fragile soils from erosion, recycle nutrient content and support the

protection of wild animal and plant biodiversity. This resolution aligns with SCAP's focus areas, agreed to by federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture through the [Guelph Statement](#), of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving carbon sequestration, improving biodiversity and protecting sensitive habitats, and protecting and regenerating soil, water and air quality.

The Government of Canada is committed to exploring new and innovative solutions, including the potential role of regenerative agriculture and supporting the development and adoption of on-farm, nature-based solutions that help to increase sequestering carbon in agricultural land, while also improving the health of our soil, water and biodiversity resources. For example, in March 2021, the federal government announced the Agricultural Climate Solutions program, which includes a \$185-million, 10-year (2021 to 2031) Living Labs stream. It aims to establish a Canada-wide network of regional collaboration between agricultural stakeholders to develop and support the adoption of farming practices to tackle climate change. These practices include nature-based solutions and beneficial management practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate resiliency. As part of Budget 2021, the Government of Canada announced the On-Farm Climate Action Fund stream of \$200 million over three years (2021 to 2024). The Fund's goal is to support producers in adopting beneficial management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in three areas: nitrogen management, cover cropping and rotational grazing practices. Budget 2022 builds on these existing investments and proposes a number of new targeted incentives to fight climate change and protect our environment. This includes \$469.5 million over six years, starting in the 2022–23 fiscal year.

Resolution #21 mentions a “long-term, low-interest loan to help livestock producers rebuild their breeding herds.” I am pleased to inform you that breeding cattle (bulls, cows and heifers) are eligible under the Advance Payments Program (APP), a federal loan guarantee program that provides agricultural producers with easy access to low-interest cash advances.

On June 23, 2022, Minister Bibeau announced a temporary increase to the interest-free limit for advances under the APP. The interest-free limit will increase from \$100,000 to \$250,000 for the 2022 and 2023 program years. There are a number of APP administrators in Saskatchewan, and I encourage you to reach out to them directly for more information.

I trust that this information will be of assistance to you. Again, thank you for writing on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Tom Rosser  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Market and Industry Services Branch