

Canadian beef producers call on Federal Government to immediately introduce back to work legislation following CP Rail work stoppage

March 21, 2022

Ottawa, ON – The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and the National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) are calling for the immediate introduction of back to work legislation following the work stoppage at Canadian Pacific Railway (CP Rail) on March 20, 2022.

Western Canadian cattle producers are dependent on feed shipments from the United States (U.S.) due to the hard-hitting drought producers faced last year from British Columbia through to Ontario. A disruption in shipments of feed grain from the U.S. will significantly impact the ability of beef producers to feed their cattle. Prior issues with rail and transportation have already reduced feed availability and feeders have been managing their needs on a train-by-train basis. There is no buffer in the system.

"We cannot wait for the parties to reach an agreement, if trains do not continue running, we will run out of feed for our animals in one to two weeks," states Bob Lowe, CCA President. "There is no time to waste, we need the back to work legislation introduced immediately to avoid an animal care disaster."

"This rail stoppage is very concerning for Canada's cattle feeders," says James Bekkering, NCFA Chair. "With a feed supply of only one to two weeks, any stoppage will put us behind and then the time it will take for trains to get up and running, we need trains moving again as soon as possible."

According to Statistics Canada, Alberta and Saskatchewan corn imports in 2021 were up 400 per cent.

Key considerations:

- Drought 2021 caused a small crop and what was available was of moderate to good quality.
 - Estimated current available feed supply is one to two weeks.
 - On February 1, 2022, there were 1.1 million head of cattle on feed in Alberta and Saskatchewan.
 - One rail car is estimated to feed approximately 8,000 head for one day, therefore we need nine to ten trains per week.
 - It is estimated that over 1,000 super-B trucks would be needed weekly to replace the volume of feed grain currently be transported by Canadian Pacific Railway trains and trucking capacity is not available leaving no alternative solutions.
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