



BRITISH COLUMBIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Beef Cattle Industry of British Columbia

AGRI CENTRE - #4 - 10145 DALLAS DRIVE, KAMLOOPS, B.C. V2C 6T4 PHONE (250) 573-3611 FAX (250) 573-5155

July 7, 2023

Honourable Pam Alexis
Minister of Agriculture and Food
PO Box 9043, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
AF.Minister@gov.bc.ca

BCCA File: 2023-035
SENT BY EMAIL

Dear Minister Alexis,

RE: Cattle Producers Affected by Widespread Drought

Thank you for attending our field tour last week of the targeted grazing site in the Okanagan. It was a pleasure having you join us on the tour to showcase efforts that are being made to reduce fine fuels and manage wildfires with managed grazing.

Ranchers are facing very dry conditions in most areas of the province, and I am concerned about the impact on feed supplies.

I have discussed the situation with my fellow BCCA directors from all 8 zones and writing to let you know that the drought conditions are widespread. Our Association has shared the results of our informal poll with your staff during a zoom call today. We are currently distributing a detailed survey to our members to assess the extent of impacts from drought, insect/pest, wildfire and available hay supplies. I've summarized our informal poll below and will keep your ministry up to date as our detailed drought/fire/hay survey data is collected.

- *Areas with average yields: Kootenay*
- *Areas with 50% of normal yields: Cariboo, Quesnel, Vancouver Island,*
- *Areas with 30% of normal yields: Vanderhoof (also impacted by heavy frosts affected the alfalfa crop).*
- *Areas with >25% of normal yields: Peace, North and South*

On behalf of our beef producer members, I ask that the province consider the following actions:

- **Revise crop insurance protocols** to allow for grain crops to be harvested as livestock feed without penalty.
- **Designate drought areas affected** by both streamflow/hydrologic and agricultural drought (this is critical because of the lack of precipitation in many areas this spring).
- **Ensure livestock drinking water is not restricted** or curtailed on surface or groundwater sources.
- **Remain in communication** with affected stakeholders
- **Establish an adhoc advisory committee** to stay up to date on drought, wildfire, and insect impacts. BCCA is prepared to participate on a committee.
- **Apply for tax deferral** in all areas impacted by drought
- **Apply for Agri-Recovery support** for areas impacted by 2023 wildfires.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the cattle industry and for considering our recommendations. Please feel free to call me on my cell 250-486-3552 or contact Kevin Boon, our General Manger, at the office 250-573-3611.

Best regards,

Brian Thomas,
BCCA President

cc: *Hon. Bowinn Ma, Minister of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness*
EMCR.Minister@gov.bc.ca