

*Standing Committee on International Trade  
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6*

February 12, 2024

Submitted via email: [CIIT@parl.gc.ca](mailto:CIIT@parl.gc.ca)

## Re: THE 2023 STRIKE AT THE PORT OF VANCOUVER: SELECTED IMPACTS, RESPONSES AND PORT- RELATED INNOVATION

### Dear Members of Parliament:

On behalf of Canada's 60,000 beef producers, the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) is providing comments to the House Standing Committee on International Trade (CIIT) regarding your study of the 2023 strike at the Port of Vancouver.

The beef industry is a significant driver of our economy as Canada's second-largest single source of farm income, contributing \$21.8 billion to our country's gross domestic product and supporting 347,672 full-time equivalent jobs. As an exporting industry, CCA has always emphasized the need for strong supply chains supported by policies and regulations that facilitate trade.

Trade is essential to our growth as an industry. Beef producers earn approximately an additional C\$1,158 per animal<sup>1</sup> because of our ability to sell in international markets. In 2022, beef and live cattle exports reached the seventh year in record value (C\$6 billion) and volume (762 million tonnes).

In August, CCA's Foreign Trade committee passed a motion urging the federal government **“to extend the designation of essential service to meat products and safeguard essential and perishable agricultural products from labour disruptions and transportation blockages.”**

The Port of Vancouver represents a significant point of trade for Canadian beef exports. In 2022, Canadian beef (including offal) exported through the Port of Vancouver was shipped to 21 countries, valued at approximately CAD \$920 million, which represents 20 per cent of total Canadian beef exports (\$4.7 billion in 2022). Of these shipments, 56 per cent were destined for Japan (CAD \$517 million), followed by South Korea, Vietnam, and Hong Kong.

CCA leadership has participated in various trade missions to Japan and South Korea, our largest beef export markets in the Indo-Pacific. In our visits, our trade partners' main priority and request has been for Canada to be a reliable and steady supplier of beef. Trade is essential for Canada and the world's food security. Not being able to fulfill our export commitments will hurt Canada's reputation as a safe and reliable trade partner and it will also impact our ability to be global leaders in food production and security.

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<sup>1</sup> (5-year average 2018-2022)



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Please note that CCA is mindful of the need to respect the collective bargaining process and as that process occurs, we need to ensure the continued movement of food. The precedence was set during the Pandemic when food was deemed an essential service. Further, there are specific exemptions for certain grain products at ports. These exemptions could be looked at as an example to prevent the loss of other perishable goods, including red meat.

Live cattle and beef exports rely heavily on the efficient transportation of goods. Disruptions to the transport of live animals and beef will invariably lead to the loss of perishable goods and to negative impacts on animal welfare. The value beef producers obtain from trade can be offset by the loss of export sales which will have a significant and negative effect on beef operations and on those employed throughout the beef supply chain.

Canadian cattle producers provide some of the most sustainable beef to the world. At a time when we're globally discussing climate change, sustainability and food security, the world needs more beef from Canada, not less.

The growth of the Canadian beef industry will depend on our ability to expand our international trade and keep strong trading relationships with our current trading partners.

For these reasons, we urge Committee Members to consider extending the designation of essential service to live cattle and meat products and safeguard essential and perishable agricultural products from labour disruptions and transportation blockages.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Babcock, Senior Director of Government and Public A

*The Canadian Cattle Association is the national voice for Canada's  
beef cattle industry representing 60,000 beef farms and feedlots.*

[www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca)

**Canada is cattle country.**