

Draft confidential IN - dairy farm

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>, Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>, McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 25, 2021 12:10:15 PM PDT
Attachments: IN_Chilliwack Dairy Farm animal welfare concerns_Oct 21.docx
Hi all,

Just sharing this high level draft issues note with you with holding lines for now and background as I know it. Please feel free to add/change anything that you see fit understanding things may change as the afternoon wears on.

I also note this story about previous abuse at another Chilliwack Dairy Farm (Chilliwack Cattle Sales) where the employees received jail time and wasn't allowed to work at large cows at the farm in question yet was allowed to work at Cedarwal.

<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/worker-in-cattle-cruelty-case-given-jail-time-but-able-to-work-at-other-farm-1.3619460>

Genereux [pleaded guilty in June](#) to two counts of animal cruelty, and was sentenced Wednesday to 45 days in jail. He's the sixth employee to receive a jail sentence, and the seventh to plead guilty.

As part of his sentence, the worker is also prohibited from having custody or care of large animals for 18 months, a representative of Mercy for Animals said. However, the court decided to make an exception to his probation terms. He will be permitted to work at Cedarwal Farms in Abbotsford, a 350-acre dairy home to 400 cows. Mercy for Animals said Genereux was among the people seen on camera beating the cows, and that his employment at another farm "belittles today's convictions for egregious and malicious animal cruelty." CTV News called Cedarwal Farms, and was told by the person who answered the phone that they were unable to comment.

Page 002 of 199 to/à Page 004 of 199

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

Draft note - dairy farm

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>, Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 26, 2021 4:46:37 PM PDT
Attachments: IN_Chilliwack Dairy Farm animal welfare concerns_Oct 21_DRAFT.docx
Updated note attached based on our conversation Arif. Let me know if anything needs to be added or if there's any newer intel.

Page 006 of 199 to/à Page 009 of 199

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

RE: Draft MLP statement for review

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>, Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>, Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>, Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>, McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 4:02:50 PM PDT
Attachments: MLP statement_dairy farm_DRAFT2.docx
Those suggestions make sense to me. Thanks!

From: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 3:59 PM
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Two suggestions.

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 15:50
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Draft MLP statement for review

Including everyone on this since time is of the essence. Please let us know what changes you'd like and when you'd like this issued. We'll give GCPE HQ a heads-up too.

Page 011 of 199

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

FW: Draft MLP statement for review

From: McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>, Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 5:31:05 PM PDT
Attachments: MLP statement_dairy farm_DRAFT.docx
Under what authority do AFF staff have right of entry to fulfill paragraph 5? I am checking.

From: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 3:59 PM
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Two suggestions.

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 15:50
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Draft MLP statement for review

Including everyone on this since time is of the essence. Please let us know what changes you'd like and when you'd like this issued. We'll give GCPE HQ a heads-up too.

STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Minister's statement on suspension of dairy farm licence

VICTORIA – Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture Food and Fisheries, has released the following statement in response to the BC Milk Marketing Board's decision to suspend the licence of Cedar Valley Farms over allegations the farm violated the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle:

"I have been advised of an animal welfare issue at a dairy farm by the BC Milk Marketing Board and am ~~shocked and~~ extremely dismayed at these very serious allegations. Animal welfare is a serious matter, and it is completely unacceptable to engage in any form of mistreating or abusing animals.

"Under B.C.'s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, the BC SPCA is mandated to respond to animals in distress and investigate animal welfare concerns, and this is what they are doing.

"The BC Milk Marketing Board has the authority to regulate and monitor all activities related to the production and marketing of dairy within B.C. I am supportive of the immediate action they are taking to ~~indefinitely~~ suspend the dairy license for the farm, pending further investigation.

"It is of utmost importance that these animals receive proper care, and I am requesting an independent review of animal husbandry be launched with respect to this farm. I have also directed ministry staff to have a presence on the farm to ensure there are no animal welfare issues or concerns.

"Most B.C. ranchers and livestock producers take great pride in the care they provide their animals and in their role as stewards of the land, and I believe the vast majority are meeting the standards in the Code.

"If there are individuals or operations that are not meeting those expected levels of care, they most certainly should be, and my expectation going forward is that my ministry will work closely with the BCSPCA and the commodity boards to identify any bad actors and take appropriate action as needed."

Contact:

Dave Townsend
Media Relations
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
250 356-7098
250 889-5945 (cell)

RE: Draft MLP statement for review -1

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>, Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>, Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>, McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>, Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 2:11:30 PM PDT
Attachments: DRAFT.pdf

Issue not in public realm yet but GCPE HQ is ready now to statement to media and it'll be going in next few minutes unless they're told to hold it.

From: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 1:40 PM
To: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>; Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Has the issue come into the public realm?

And are we comfortable with it in the context of the AG concerns?

From: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 13:37
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>; Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Brian is having it prepped now, so shortly.

Tim Renneberg
Senior Ministerial Advisor to
the Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
tim.renneberg@gov.bc.ca
250.387.1023

From: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 1:37 PM
To: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>; Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Draft MLP statement for review

Any idea on when it might be released?

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 28, 2021, at 12:57 PM, Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Sorry. This is the correct version

Tim Renneberg
Senior Ministerial Advisor to
the Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
tim.renneberg@gov.bc.ca
250.387.1023

From: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 11:45 AM
To: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

My comments

From: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 6:08 PM
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

MLP and I have pared this down. Anyone have concerns about this version?

Tim Renneberg
Senior Ministerial Advisor to
the Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
tim.renneberg@gov.bc.ca
250.387.1023

From: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 5:41 PM
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Yes – need Tim to give the ok

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 5:32 PM
To: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Just confirming this is the final version attached and you want it to go to media as soon as the editors can publish it?

From: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 5:20 PM

To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

It currently says "we have asked," so I think that's fine.

From: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 17:19
To: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

If that is too pointed then you can go with Ministry

From: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 4:56 PM
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Would it be the minister who has asked the Milk Board to play that role?

From: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 16:34
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Some further edits for review. MLP has weighed in but not sure I caught it correctly (or grammatically)

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 4:03 PM
To: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Those suggestions make sense to me. Thanks!

From: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 27, 2021 3:59 PM
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Draft MLP statement for review

Two suggestions.

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: October 27, 2021 15:50

To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>;

Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX

<Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Draft MLP statement for review

Including everyone on this since time is of the essence. Please let us know what changes you'd like and when you'd like this issued. We'll give GCPE HQ a heads-up too.

<MLP statement_dairy farm_DRAFT 2 TR.docx>

STATEMENT

Not Approved
Oct. 28, 2021

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Minister's statement on suspension of dairy farm licence

VICTORIA – Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture Food and Fisheries, has released the following statement in response to the BC Milk Marketing Board's decision to suspend the licence of Cedar Valley Farms over allegations the farm violated the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle:

"I am shocked and extremely disappointed at the information that has been relayed to me about alleged actions at this farm, and I fully support the BC Milk Marketing Board's decision to suspend the dairy licence, pending further investigation.

"Under B.C.'s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, the BC SPCA is mandated to respond to animals in distress and investigate animal welfare concerns, and this is what they are doing.

"The BC Milk Marketing Board has the authority to regulate and monitor all activities related to the production and marketing of dairy products within B.C.

"It is of utmost importance that these animals receive proper care. While an investigation is underway, I have asked the milk marketing board to make sure a qualified observer has a presence on the farm to ensure there are no animal welfare issues or concerns.

"B.C. ranchers and livestock producers take great pride in the care they provide their animals and in their role as stewards of the land. I believe the vast majority are meeting the standards in the code.

"My ministry will work closely with the BC SPCA and the commodity boards to identify any contraventions to the code and take appropriate action as needed."

Contact:

Dave Townsend
Media Relations
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
250 356-7098
250 889-5945 (mobile)

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect

BC Gov News - Minister's statement on suspension of dairy farm licence

From: noreply.newsondemand@gov.bc.ca
To: Whittington, Elissa AFF:EX <Elissa.Whittington@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 2:48:00 PM PDT
[banner](#)

Minister's statement on suspension of dairy farm licence

Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture Food and Fisheries, has released the following statement in response to the BC Milk Marketing Board's decision to suspend the licence of Cedar Valley Farms over allegations the farm violated the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle:

[▶ READ MORE](#)

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Please do not respond to this message

FW: Animal welfare assurance on BC commercial farms

From: Todosichuk, Ardice AFF:EX <Ardice.Todosichuk@gov.bc.ca>
To: Anderson, Arlene AFF:EX <Arlene.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 3:22:38 PM PDT
Attachments: image001.png, 21 10 28 Letter to Minister re Commercial Farms.pdf
FYI

From: McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 3:15 PM
To: Todosichuk, Ardice AFF:EX <Ardice.Todosichuk@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Animal welfare assurance on BC commercial farms

FYI

From: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 2:24 PM
To: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Animal welfare assurance on BC commercial farms

From: Craig Daniell <cdaniell@spca.bc.ca>
Sent: October 28, 2021 1:47 PM
To: Minister, AFF AFF:EX <AFF.Minister@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Animal welfare assurance on BC commercial farms

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Good afternoon Minister Popham,

Attached please find correspondence from the BC SPCA as it relates to animal welfare on commercial farms.

Sincerely,

Craig Daniell
(He/Him)
Chief Executive Officer
and guardian to Thor, Johnny and Zoey
BC SPCA
1245 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5T 1R1
604.647.1322
1-855.622.7722 • cdaniell@spca.bc.ca • spca.bc.ca
Animal Cruelty and Wildlife Hotline: 1.855.622.7722

Respectfully acknowledging that I work on, and this email was sent from, the unceded traditional territory of the downriver hən̓q̓əmiṇəm speaking peoples - ,xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), and səliwətaʔt̓ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and the Skwxwú7mesh-ulh Sníchim speaking peoples - Skwxwú7mesh Uxwumixw (Squamish) Nation whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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PROVINCIAL OFFICE

1245 East 7th Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, V5T 1R1
P 604.681.7271 • F 604.661.7022 • 1.800.665.1868 • spca.bc.ca
Charitable Registration # BN 11881 9036 RR0001

October 28, 2021

Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
P.O. Box 9043
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Popham:

Re: Animal welfare assurance on commercial farms in British Columbia

As you are aware, video footage appearing to depict very serious instances of animal abuse on a dairy farm in the Fraser Valley have recently come to light. While I can confirm that BC SPCA Special Provincial Constables are currently conducting a comprehensive investigation to determine whether there have been any breaches of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCAA), that is not the primary purpose of this correspondence.

Almost one year ago, I wrote the Ministry expressing deep concern at the lack of independent oversight and regulation of the commercial farm industry and calling on the Ministry to establish a third party auditing system that will provide assurances to British Columbians that commercially raised farm animals are in fact being raised according to industry's own Codes of Practice. I noted further that the BC SPCA, a privately funded charity employing approximately 40 special constables, could not possibly provide effective oversight of more than 5,000 commercial farms, nor did it seek such authority. A copy of my letter dated November 6, 2020 is attached.

So concerned was the BC SPCA by this lack of oversight that a decision was also made that, despite the limited resources available to the society, a series of limited unannounced inspections of commercial farms (12 in total for 6 commodity groups) under the inspection provisions of the PCAA would be undertaken to, at the very least, provide some form of independent assessment of the state of farm animal welfare in the province.

It is also relevant to note that when the BC SPCA announced that it would be utilizing its inspection powers under the PCAA, there was immediate and significant opposition from industry to these planned unannounced inspections. While the Ministry took the formal position that it was "*a neutral observer in the process, it specifically questioned the BC SPCA's impetus for proceeding with the inspections at this time*". I would suggest further that it was far from enthusiastic about the BC SPCA proceeding along this path. In fact, the only tangible recommendation made by the Ministry in this particular matter was directed not at industry, but to the BC SPCA, "*to develop bylaws as contemplated in Section 6 of the PCAA relating to policies and operational procedures for administering the enforcement powers of the Act and recommending further that industry be engaged and consulted on the development of such bylaws*". See in this regard the letter of the Deputy Minister dated August 20, 2021.

To date, as far as we can reasonably determine, there has been no attempt by the Ministry to hold industry to account for the lack of oversight and now we are faced with yet another shocking revelation of suspected animal abuse on a commercial farm and related issues concerning its operators that are deeply troubling. This is all the more frustrating given our repeated overtures to Ministry staff that these events are bound to continue to occur without effective and independent oversight.

When the video footage of this case is released to the public by the independent animal organization who forwarded it to the BC SPCA for investigation, British Columbians are once again going to be shocked by what they see happening behind some barn doors and will rightfully be asking when will the government take action to hold industry to account. The position that *"this is simply the actions of a very small number of operators and not indicative of industry as a whole"* can no longer be supported given the footage in this case, its operators and the inevitability of further video footage emerging in the future.

Accordingly, I again urge you to bring public confidence back to this sector by mandating a government or third party verification and oversight system for the commercial farm industry. While we acknowledge that such a process is challenging and likely has significant cost implications, the government has to start somewhere and can at the very least take immediate action by mandating both the installation and independent monitoring of video cameras in all commercial farm operations in British Columbia.

Sincerely,



Craig Daniell
Chief Executive Officer

Cc. Melissa Barcellos President, Board of Directors

Enc. Letter of Craig Daniell to Deputy Minister Tom Ethier dated November 6, 2020
Letter of Deputy Minister Tom Ethier to Marcie Moriarty dated August 20, 2021

PROVINCIAL OFFICE

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November 6, 2020

Mr. Tom Ethier
Deputy Minister of Agriculture
PO Box 9120, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9B4

Dear Mr. Ethier,

Re: Enforcement of the PCA Act on commercial farms

I am writing to provide an update on an evolving issue regarding the BC SPCA's enforcement of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCA Act) on commercial farms.

In 2019, the BC SPCA received a complaint and a video appearing to depict the unacceptable treatment of animals allegedly at Excelsior Hog Farm in Abbotsford. In response to this video, BC SPCA special constables, with prior notice to and subsequent later approval from Excelsior, attended at the farm with experts in porcine welfare to investigate the allegations, but observed no evidence of code violations at the time of the inspection. As the only evidence in the investigation was a video that was subsequently discovered to be obtained illegally following a break-in to the property, the BC SPCA was advised by Crown counsel that the case could not move forward as the evidence would not be admissible in court. From an investigative perspective, the file was then closed.

As you are no doubt aware, the Excelsior case has resulted in significant media attention and public protests, many of which have been directed against the BC SPCA. The protesters and their supporters (a number of which are BC SPCA donors and supporters) mistakenly believe that the decision to not proceed with a prosecution was solely that of the BC SPCA. More concerning is the belief that the BC SPCA is condoning acts of animal cruelty perpetrated by Excelsior and protecting the interests of industry by failing to take action in this case.

While I fully support the decision made by our Cruelty Investigations Department not to pursue the allegations further criminally, there is no doubt that this incident has caused significant and potentially long lasting challenges for the organization including recent protests at both our Abbotsford and Vancouver facilities this week, impacting the operations of our animal care, hospital and provincial office teams. This is particularly challenging to address during a pandemic. In addition, some of our staff have been subjected to unacceptable personal attacks on social media as a result of the case. Moreover, the BC SPCA has lost financial support from a number of long time donors, who now believe the Society is not doing enough for farm animals.

The BC SPCA has been active in advocating for higher standards of care for farm animals throughout its 125-year history. In addition to our work in B.C., our farm animal experts actively participate in the NFACC Code development process that brings together industry, animal welfare, veterinarians, scientists and others to seek mutually agreed improvements to farm codes of practice. We have always been a strong supporter of this inclusive process, believing that more is achieved through collaboration rather than adversarial relationships. That approach, however, is based on the premise that Codes of Practice are indeed implemented by industry

associations and we are growing increasingly skeptical that this is the case.

While we cannot confirm the veracity of the claims made on the Excelsior video, we are extremely concerned by a trend we see developing, namely that industry lead verification schemes are not achieving a level of public accountability and trust and that what is needed is government mandated regulation and oversight, perhaps through a third party auditing program that provides the assurance needed for British Columbians that commercially raised farm animals are being raised according to industry supported Codes of Practice.

At present, it appears the task of regulating industry appears to fall to the BC SPCA, via its enforcement function. This is a wholly unacceptable situation on at least three levels. Firstly, enforcement is not an effective tool to regulate an industry. Secondly, the BC SPCA, as a donor funded organization, has no capacity to regulate the more than 6,000 commercial farms in British Columbia, nor does it wish to be involved in such an endeavor, and finally we are well aware of the apparent lack of trust that industry has in the work of the BC SPCA.

We understand that no new directives can be taken at this time prior to the formation of government and Cabinet members being sworn in, but hope it is my hope that you will prioritize this issue for the incoming Minister, as well as provide them with a brief on the challenges raised. We look forward to scheduling a meeting with the new Minister to discuss the issue further upon their appointment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Daniell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small loop at the end of the last name.

Craig Daniell
Chief Executive Officer



August 20, 2021

File: 0280-30

Ref: 195738

Marcie Moriarty
Chief Prevention and Enforcement Officer BC SPCA
1245 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5T 1R1

Dear Marcie:

Thank you for your August 12, 2021 letter providing an update on the BC Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) efforts and challenges related to your proposed commercial farm inspections.

The efforts over the past two months by the BC SPCA to engage with the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries (the Ministry) is appreciated. The multiple calls and emails to discuss the upcoming commercial farm inspections and the finalization of the agreement for AFF Observer participation helps to support an effective working relationship.

I am aware of the media report by Country Life on their Facebook page regarding the proposed commercial farm inspections. The Ministry has no control over the media and their reporting. The response letter provided by British Columbia Chicken Marketing Board provides a reasonable explanation and outlines a sound approach for correcting any misinformation. Any corrections to the Country Life reporting are best taken up directly with the media outlet.

.../2

Regarding your comments about threats or violence against your staff. The Province does not tolerate violence in any workplace. The agriculture sector has unfortunately experienced these types of unacceptable comments and behaviours in the workplace. It appears that risks of violence and threatening behaviour have occurred from the regulated parties (farm operators) towards inspectors and officers, and from extreme animal activists towards farm operators. Safety for all activities on farms (inspections and farm operations) is of the utmost importance. Safety of your staff should be your priority. The Province supports all employers implementing robust safety policies to ensure protection of workers in their workplace.

As an entity with delegated inspection and enforcement responsibilities on behalf of the Province, it's important for the BC SPCA to demonstrate transparency to all British Columbians when performing duties under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA). BC SPCA's efforts to conduct commercial farm inspections visibly, predictably, and understandably promotes participation, accountability, and ultimately public trust. To this end, the Ministry supports ongoing dialogue between the BC SPCA and agriculture producers. While this dialogue may pose challenges like the Country Life article, it is only through continued discussion and engagement that issues are resolved and progress is achieved.

To support continued dialogue and enhanced transparency, the Ministry suggests that the BC SPCA develop bylaws as contemplated by s. 6 of the PCAA that relate to the policies and operational procedures of the BC SPCA in performing its enforcement powers under the PCAA. As part of this initiative, the Ministry recommends that the BC SPCA adopt an engagement and consultation process with the BC Agriculture Council (BCAC), and other government agencies (as necessary) to inform the underlying policy for these bylaws. The Ministry is willing to arrange and facilitate this engagement and consultation process. A dialogue on the policies and operational procedures related to the BC SPCA's enforcement powers under the PCAA would demonstrate the BC SPCA's willingness to continue to act visibly, predictably, and understandably in exercising its legislated authority and the Ministry would be happy to arrange and facilitate this engagement and consultation process.

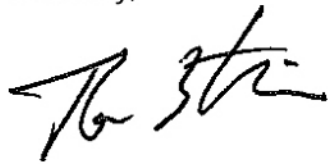
The Ministry has not yet received a copy of the inspection framework/checklist for use by the SPCA during the upcoming commercial farm inspections. I understand this was requested by ministry staff on July 7.

.../3

The Ministry will continue to engage with all parties (BC SPCA, BCAC and commodity groups) to discuss challenges and opportunities. I do take exception to the inference that the ministry has not provided the same courtesies to the BC SPCA as the commodity groups. I understand there have been over eight meetings/calls with the BC SPCA plus email correspondence over the past seven months plus the financial support that has been provided by government over the years.

As these inspections are BC SPCA initiated and lead, the ministry will remain as a neutral observer. Given the ongoing wildfire and drought situation and the extensive recovery efforts ahead of the sector, ministry staff are focused on supporting producers in dire need and question the BC SPCA's impetus for proceeding with these inspections at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Ethier', written in a cursive style.

Tom Ethier
Deputy Minister

cc: Jennifer McGuire, ADM

FW: BC Dairy messaging

From: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
To: Popham, Lana AFF:EX <Lana.Popham@gov.bc.ca>, Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>, Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>, Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>, McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Norton, Chris AFF:EX <Chris.Norton@gov.bc.ca>, Evers, Charlene AFF:EX <Charlene.Evers@gov.bc.ca>, Rainforth, Kelly A AFF:EX <Kelly.Rainforth@gov.bc.ca>, Hansen, Erin AFF:EX <Erin.Hansen@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: October 29, 2021 12:37:34 PM PDT
Attachments: Updated Key Messages for Media - Oct 29.pdf, BC Dairy Statement on suspension of dairy farm license (website use) Oct. 29 DRAFT.pdf, DRAFT Consumer Messages for Social Media (Updated October 29th @ 12pm) - BC Dairy .pdf

Arif Lalani | ADM | Agriculture Resource Division | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

C 250.208.9902 | E arif.lalani@gov.bc.ca

I respectfully acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt) people.

From: Jeremy Dunn <jdunn@bcdairy.ca>
Sent: October 29, 2021 12:23 PM
To: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Fwd: BC Dairy messaging

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

draft social messaging, statement, and key messages

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BC Dairy Key Messages – UPDATED (prior to video release) – Oct 29
For Holger Schwichtenberg

TOP MESSAGES:

- This is a serious matter, and being addressed as such. No milk is being shipped from the farm in question, and we are working to ensure the cows are being properly cared for.
- I am a dairy farmer myself. Speaking personally, I am distressed by these allegations. Dairy farmers are passionate about the care of their animals, and work around the clock to ensure their health and wellbeing.
- We take allegations of animal mistreatment or abuse very seriously. Such behaviour is unacceptable and has no place on a dairy farm.

BACKGROUND MESSAGES:

- The BC Milk Marketing Board received evidence from the BC SPCA involving what appears to me like abuse directed towards animals on a BC dairy farm.
- The board conducted an inspection and immediately suspended the farm's milk license pending further investigation.
- The BC Dairy Association fully supports the decision made by the BC Milk Marketing Board. We will assist the Milk Board and BC SPCA investigations in any way we can.
- Our immediate priority is the care of the animals on the farm. The BC Milk Marketing Board is working with the BC SPCA and BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to have a qualified, independent professional appointed to supervise the animal's care during the investigations.
- Both the Milk Marketing Board and BC SPCA have started their own investigations. If the allegations are substantiated, the treatment of animals on this farm clearly violates our national code for animal care.
- All dairy farmers in BC are required to abide by our code for the care of animals, and make sure their staff are well trained in it. The code covers areas such as how to handle dairy cows, how to feed them, and ensuring they have plenty of space and good bedding. It was developed by industry, the federal government, veterinarians and animal welfare researchers.

- Nothing is more important to dairy farmers than the health and wellbeing of their animals.

Q&A

About video evidence (as referenced in the BC SPCA release)

Q: When did the BC Milk Marketing Board find out about these allegations?

A: The BC Milk Marketing Board was presented evidence by the BC SPCA on Tuesday, and confirmed that evidence in an inspection this morning.

Q: What evidence did the milk board have to suspend the producer's license?

A: The BC SPCA has provided evidence of serious Dairy Code of Practice violations on a dairy farm to the Milk Board. The board inspected the farm, and then held a meeting at which they immediately suspended the producer's license. The farm's milk will not be shipped to processors while the license is suspended. The BC Dairy Association fully supports the decision made by the BC Milk Marketing Board.

Q: What kind of evidence?

A: The SPCA showed video footage of what appears to me as animal abuse. The Milk Board inspected the farm to confirm the validity of the video. The SPCA is also inspecting this farm.

Q: When was the video taken?

A: The SPCA has informed us that the video was taken over the summer at this dairy farm. The Milk Board has seen enough evidence to suspend the producer's license and launch an investigation.

Q: Will the Milk Board or the BC SPCA be making the video evidence public?

A: The BC SPCA possesses the video. The Milk Board is not in a position to make the video public due to the ongoing investigation.

Q: Can you describe to me what the video depicts?

From my perspective, the video shows what appears to be abusive treatment directed towards the cows on the farm. The Milk Board is in the early stages of their investigation. More information will be shared as the investigation progresses.

Q: Are animals being beaten?

A: The actions on the video were sufficient for the milk board to suspend the farm's milk license and launch an investigation. It's important for the board to fully investigate this serious matter, and then make a decision on the future of the farm's milk license with all the facts in hand.

Claims made by BC SPCA / perception of lack of accountability

Q: The BC SPCA claims that there is no oversight of the dairy industry/the industry has been negligent in protecting dairy cattle in BC. What is your response?

A: Our industry has robust standards and inspection regimes in place for the care of dairy cattle. We have a good working relationship with the BC SPCA, and they play an important role in the protection of animals. We will consider the findings of the investigation of this matter carefully, and may find we need to make some changes. We're always looking for ways to get better at all aspects of farming, including animal care.

Q: This happened in 2014 - the industry said it would take steps to make sure this would never happen again...and now it has. How was this allowed to happen again?

A: I think I can speak for all farmers in saying that we are distressed by the allegations.

Since 2014, we have taken several steps to strengthen the inspection and compliance regimes involving animal welfare. The BC Milk Marketing Board added the national Dairy Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle to their Consolidated Order, which means all dairy farmers must comply with the Code.

If they do not comply, action will be taken immediately, including the suspension of their license to produce milk. This is what took place after the Milk Board reviewed the video evidence.

Additionally, the BC Dairy Association worked with the provincial government to reference the code of practice within the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, a positive regulatory change that took place following 2014.

We also supported the Dairy Farmers of Canada in enacting proAction, a national program which requires dairy farmers to demonstrate adherence to best practice standards in six areas of work--including animal care. proAction is mandatory for all farms in BC.

That said, we will consider the findings of the investigation of this matter carefully, and may find we need to make some changes. We're always looking for ways to get better at all aspects of farming, including animal care.

Q: What can be done to ensure this does not happen again?

A: Our industry has robust standards and inspection regimes in place for the care of dairy cattle.

That said, we will consider the findings of the investigation of this matter carefully, and may find we need to make some changes. We're always looking for ways to get better at all aspects of farming, including animal care.

Q: The BCSPCA is suggesting 24-hour video surveillance of dairy farms should be mandatory. What is your response?

A: We have not yet had the opportunity to consider that. We have a good working relationship with the BC SPCA, and they play an important role in the protection of animals. As an industry, we will need to work with the SPCA to find responsible solutions.

Q: Would you be open to the BCSPCA's suggestions about third party audits of farms?

A: Dairy farms in BC are inspected through our industry proAction program, as well as by the BC Ministry of Agriculture. The BC SPCA also has an important role to play regarding the protection of animals. We will need to work together to consider changes or additional measures we might take to ensure the health and well-being of dairy cows in BC.

Q: The Milk Board is run by farmers...the BC dairy association is run by farmers...what do you say to those who believe farmers can't be trusted to self-regulate?

A: As farmers, we have a responsibility to demonstrate leadership and accountability for the treatment of animals entrusted to our care.

We also have independent oversight by the agriculture ministry and BC SPCA. Our dairy code of practice was developed through close consultation with the federal government, animal welfare advocates, world-renowned animal researchers and veterinarians. All dairy farmers in Canada must follow the code, with strict penalties for non-compliance, including the possibility of their license being cancelled.

Q: What would you say to a consumer who has lost all trust in the dairy industry / consumers who say they will never buy milk again?

A: As a farmer, I am saddened by the allegations. Animal mistreatment or abuse is unacceptable and has no place in our industry.

The BC Milk Marketing Board is sending a message to the public and all dairy farms that mistreatment and abuse will not be tolerated. If the allegations are substantiated, the abuse of animals on this farm clearly violates our code for animal care.

Q: You say animal care is your top priority, and yet dairy farms rely on animal cruelty. You force cows to have calves to maintain their milk production. You separate calves from their moms immediately after birth. You kill the male calves, while their sisters will grow up to repeat the cycle. Isn't it hypocritical to say you care for those animals?

A: The Milk Board has sent a strong message to the public and all dairy farms that mistreatment and abuse of animals will not be tolerated. If the allegations are substantiated, the abuse of animals on this farm clearly violates our code for animal care, and the farm's license may be permanently cancelled.

Concerns about the cows

Q: Are the cows ok today?

A: BC Milk Board staff have been onsite to ensure the animals are alright. We will work with the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to ensure independent oversight of the care of the dairy cattle on the farm while the investigation is underway.

Q: What will happen to the animals on the farm?

A: The Milk Marketing Board and Ministry of Agriculture have independent oversight of the cow's care while the investigation is ongoing. The health and wellbeing of the animals is our primary concern.

Q: How many cows does this farm have?

A: I cannot comment on the farm size. This is a serious matter. The board is taking immediate action to protect the animals and immediately suspended the farm's milk license.

As of this moment no milk will be shipped from that farm. The farm's license will remain suspended until the completion of a full investigation. We will work with the BC SPCA and BC Ministry of Agriculture to ensure the animals will be cared for.

Q: I understand that this is an organic farm. What do these allegations mean for the standards in place for organic dairy farms?

A: We have strong regulations for the care of cows on all dairy farms in BC, whether organic or conventional.

All dairy farmers in BC must abide by National Farm Animal Care Council's Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle. It's mandatory, and the owner is responsible for ensuring it's adhered to, and for hiring employees with the temperament, skills, and training needed to handle dairy cows.

I can't comment on organic standards. It will be up to the organic certifying body to initiate any measures that relate to the farm's certification.

The investigation / consequences

Q: How long will an investigation take? How will it be conducted? Is it possible it will find the farmer is not at fault and will get their license back?

A: Our immediate priority is to ensure the animals involved are cared for, and to ensure milk from this farm is not picked up pending that investigation. That has been done.

The BC Milk Marketing Board investigation will be led by a qualified animal welfare inspector, and involve the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. The investigation will be thorough--and take as long as it needs to take in order to receive clear answers. The BC Dairy Association will support the BC SPCA and BC Milk Marketing Board investigations in any way we can.

Q: What are the possible penalties involved? What penalty are those involved likely to receive?

A: The role of the BC Milk Marketing Board is the regulation of milk supply including licenses and quota. The board has immediately suspended this farm's milk license pending the outcome of its investigation.

Criminal charges are the responsibility of the BCSPCA and the BC prosecution service.

Q: I understand the farm's owner is a veterinarian. Do you know for certain he knew this was happening? Will he lose his veterinary license?

A: All dairy farmers in BC must abide by National Farm Animal Care Council's Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle. It's mandatory, and the owner is responsible for ensuring it's adhered to, and for hiring employees with the temperament, skills, and training needed to handle dairy cows.

I cannot comment on the owner's status as a veterinarian. That's up to the College of Veterinarians of BC, which has its own standards of practice.

Q: News articles from 2017 indicate that Brad Genereux - who was convicted of animal abuse - has been employed at this farm. Was he involved in this incident?

A: The Milk Board is investigating and that will be a question that will be asked.

Q: We understand that the Vanderwal family owns another dairy farm. What is happening with their other farm? Who is taking care of the cows there?

A: Although the allegations that we have viewed are specific to Cedar Valley Farms, the BC Milk Marketing Board has also inspected a second farm owned by the same immediate family. At this time, my understanding is that staff are not shared between the two farms, but that is a question the investigations will look at. The Milk Board, BC Dairy and BC SPCA are taking this matter very seriously - our primary concern is the health and welfare of the animals.

Q: What is the BCDA's role in this, vs. the milk board and SPCA?

A: The BC Milk Board is our industry's regulator, responsible for issuing and managing milk production licenses and quotas in the province. They have the authority to suspend those in animal abuse cases. The SPCA is an independent agency, responsible for investigating any charges of animal cruelty, whether on a farm or involving domestic pets. The SPCA can recommend charges to prosecutors - that's up to them.

The BC Dairy Association is an association of the 470 dairy farmers in BC. We are responsible for proAction, which is a program where producers demonstrate adherence to standards in six areas of dairy farming, including animal care. Our code of animal care falls within that.

Milk supply

Q: Is the milk supply compromised because of this farm's license suspension?

A: No. This is just one farm in BC - there will be no impact that I am aware of to our milk supply.

Q: What happens to the milk that is not being picked up on the farm?

A: The farmer will be expected to dispose of the milk in an environmentally responsible manner, in accordance with provincial regulations.

If needed: This typically takes place within the nutrient management or manure storage structure on a farm, allowing the milk to be safely composted.

Oct. 29th, 2021 (DRAFT)

BC Dairy Association statement on suspension of dairy farm licence

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Media Contact:

Christine Terpsma
604-603-7872
media@bcmilk.com

Shawn Hall
604-619-7913
shawn@apogeepr.ca

Consumer Messages for Social Media (Oct 29) - BC Dairy

Issue status: [BCMMB Industry Notice](#) and [Ministry of Agriculture Statement](#) has been published, but no other video or statements have been made public.

Note: when a consumer question can be answered by linking to the [BCMMB Industry Notice](#), that is the preferred response for the time being. Do not offer additional information unless asked. Whenever appropriate, emphasize that 'BC Dairy fully supports the decision of the BC Milk Marketing Board in this matter.'

Q: I've heard a BC dairy farm has been shut down because the cows were being abused, is this true? (This answer can be used for a variety of questions as it leads to the statement)

Social A:

Earlier this week, the BC Milk Marketing Board, the provincial regulator for our industry, received evidence from the BC SPCA involving allegations of animal abuse on a BC dairy farm. The Board conducted an inspection, and based on that, immediately suspended the farm's license to produce milk pending further investigation. You can read more here: <https://bit.ly/3bn8yMk>

BC Dairy fully supports the decision of the BC Milk Marketing Board in this matter.

Q: Why has the farm's license been suspended?

Social A:

Animal mistreatment or abuse is not acceptable and can not be tolerated. All dairy farmers in BC are required to abide by a code for the care of animals, and make sure their staff are well trained in it. The code covers areas such as how to handle dairy cows, how to feed them, and ensuring they have plenty of space and good bedding. It was developed by industry, the federal government, veterinarians, and animal welfare researchers.

Based on the evidence provided, full investigations will be undertaken by both the BC SPCA and the BC Milk Marketing Board. If the allegations are substantiated through investigation, the treatment of animals on this farm violates our national code for animal care.

Q: Are the cows ok today?

Social A:

The immediate priority is the health and wellbeing of the animals. The BC SPCA conducted an inspection of the farm on Tuesday, and the staff of the BC Milk Board have been to the farm to ensure the animals are alright. The Milk Board will work with the SPCA and the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to ensure independent oversight of the care of the dairy cattle on the farm while the investigation is underway.

Q: What happens to the milk?

Social A:

This is a serious matter, and is being treated as such. The farm's milk will not be picked up or shipped to processors while the license is suspended.

Q: Does all that milk get dumped/wasted?

The farmer will be expected to dispose of the milk in an environmentally responsible manner, in accordance with provincial regulations.

Q: What evidence was provided by the SPCA?/Are the cows being beaten/hit etc.? Was it caught on video?

Social A:

The evidence shared by the SPCA involved allegations of animal abuse , and was sufficient for the Milk Board to suspend the farm's milk license and launch an investigation. It's important that the authorities involved are able to fully investigate this serious matter, and then make a decision on the future of the farm's milk license with all the facts and perspectives in hand.

Q: How could this happen on a dairy farm if you have such high standards?

Social A:

Both the Milk Marketing Board and BC SPCA have started their own investigations into this matter. Animal mistreatment or abuse is not acceptable and can not be tolerated

All dairy farmers in BC are required to abide by a code for the care of animals, and make sure their staff are well trained in it. It was developed by industry, the federal government, veterinarians and animal welfare researchers.

Nothing is more important to dairy farmers than the health and wellbeing of their animals. This is a serious matter, and being addressed as such.

Q: I understand that this is an organic farm. What do these allegations mean for the standards in place for organic dairy farms?

All dairy farmers in BC must abide by the same code for animal care, whether organic or conventional. Animal mistreatment or abuse on any farm is not acceptable and will not be tolerated

Q: Will you make the evidence publically available?

Social A: The evidence cannot be made public due to the ongoing investigation.

Q: What exactly is the code for animal care on dairy farms?

All dairy farmers in BC must abide by the [National Farm Animal Care Council's Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle](#). It's mandatory, and the farm owner is responsible for ensuring it's adhered to, and for hiring employees with the temperament, skills, and training needed to handle dairy cows.

Q: How many cows does this farm have?

Social A: This information is not publicly available. The BC Milk Marketing Board will work with the BC SPCA and BC Ministry of Agriculture to ensure the animals will be cared for.

Q: How long will an investigation take? How will it be conducted? Is it possible it will find the farmer is not at fault and will get their license back?

Social A: The immediate priority was to ensure the animals involved are cared for, and to ensure milk from this farm is not picked up pending that investigation. That has been done.

The BC Milk Marketing Board investigation is being led by a qualified animal welfare inspector, and involves the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. The investigation will be thorough--and take as long as it needs to take in order to receive clear answers.

Q: What are the possible penalties involved? What penalty are those involved likely to receive?

A: The role of the BC Milk Marketing Board is the regulation of milk supply including licenses and quota. They have immediately suspended this farm's milk license pending the outcome of its investigation.

Criminal charges are the responsibility of the BCSPCA and the BC prosecution service.

For reference: [BCMMB Industry Notice](#) (use link on social, not full text)

Cedar Valley Farms License Suspension

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FW: Animal Justice - Meeting Request to Discuss Oversight of Farmed Animal Welfare in British Columbia

From: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Evers, Charlene AFF:EX <Charlene.Evers@gov.bc.ca>, Rainforth, Kelly A AFF:EX <Kelly.Rainforth@gov.bc.ca>, Hansen, Erin AFF:EX <Erin.Hansen@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 2, 2021 2:24:55 PM PDT
Attachments: Animal Justice Letter to Minister Popham re Meeting Request (Farmed Animal Welfare in BC).pdf

Arif Lalani | ADM | Agriculture Resource Division | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
C 250.208.9902 | E arif.lalani@gov.bc.ca

I respectfully acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt) people.

From: Sundhu, Ellora AFF:EX <Ellora.Sundhu@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 2, 2021 11:06 AM
To: McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Norton, Chris AFF:EX <Chris.Norton@gov.bc.ca>; Hansen, Erin AFF:EX <Erin.Hansen@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Animal Justice - Meeting Request to Discuss Oversight of Farmed Animal Welfare in British Columbia

Hello! Can anyone please advise on this meeting request?

Thanks!

From: Scott Tinney <stinney@animaljustice.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 6:56 AM
To: Minister, AFF AFF:EX <AFF.Minister@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Camille Labchuk <camille@animaljustice.ca>
Subject: Animal Justice - Meeting Request to Discuss Oversight of Farmed Animal Welfare in British Columbia

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Good Morning,

I write to you on behalf of Animal Justice. In light of [recent reports](#) of "serious instances of animal abuse" taking place on Cedar Valley organic farm, we request the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your government's oversight of the welfare of animals on BC farms. Please see attached correspondence for our detailed request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Scott

--

Scott Tinney
Staff Lawyer
Animal Justice
416-720-8681
www.animaljustice.ca

Learn more about our work by tuning into [Paw & Order](#)—Canada's only animal law podcast!



November 2, 2021

Hon. Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture
PO Box 9043 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Via Email

Dear Minister Popham:

Re: Meeting Request to Discuss Oversight of Farmed Animal Welfare in British Columbia

I write to you on behalf of Animal Justice—Canada’s leading national organization focused on improving legal protections for animals. We request the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your government’s oversight of the welfare of animals on BC farms.

As you are aware, the BC SPCA has received lengthy video footage taken at Cedar Valley organic dairy farm in Abbotsford, British Columbia. Cedar Valley is owned by Cedarwal Farms. The BC SPCA is in the midst of investigating this matter and has characterized the footage as depicting “very serious instances of animal abuse.”¹ The BC Milk Marketing Board suspended the dairy license for Cedar Valley Farms, pending further investigation.² Although the footage at issue has not yet been released publicly, this matter has already been the focus of national and local news coverage over the last week.³

We appreciate the level of concern that you expressed in your public statement in response to the suspension of Cedar Valley’s dairy license by the BC Milk Marketing Board. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that footage obtained from inside a BC farm has shown violent abuse and mistreatment of animals. In fact, footage from employee whistleblowers and others has repeatedly shown appalling conditions and abuse at farms.

For instance, in 2014, Mercy For Animals Canada (“MFAC”) released shocking footage from Chilliwack Cattle Sales Ltd. – a dairy company in Chilliwack, British Columbia – showing employees kicking, punching, and beating cows on their faces and bodies with

¹ See: <https://spca.bc.ca/news/animal-cruelty-fraser-valley-dairy-farm/>

² See: <https://bcmilk.com/notice-to-industry-cedar-valley-farms-license-suspension/>

³ For example, see: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/cedar-valley-dairy-farm-licence-suspension-1.6229582>; see also: <https://www.abbynews.com/news/bc-sPCA-investigating-alleged-animal-abuse-at-fraser-valley-farm/>

Animal Justice Canada
5700-100 King Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5X 1C7
info@animaljustice.ca

canes, chains, metal pipes, and rakes, among other horrific acts.⁴ Following the release of this footage, the BC SPCA laid charges against the company and employees responsible for the abuse, several of whom pleaded guilty to animal abuse and faced fines and jail time.⁵ The veterinarian who was responsible for overseeing operations at Chilliwack Cattle Sales Ltd. when this exposé was released, s.3 also appears to be an owner of Cedarwal Farms.

In 2017, MFAC released footage obtained by an employee whistleblower showing horrific conditions at s.3 chicken catching company also located in Chilliwack, British Columbia. That footage showed, among other things, individuals kicking, beating, and throwing birds; chickens being smashed into walls and having their wings ripped off while still alive; and sexual abuse of birds. As a result of the exposé, several charges were filed against s.3, among others. In September, 2021, the company pleaded guilty to causing undue suffering to animals.⁶

In 2019, PETA released eyewitness video from s.3 Abbotsford, British Columbia which showed pigs in unsanitary conditions crammed inside tiny crates, pigs that were evidently injured, hobbled, or sick, and piglets suffering and dying beside their mothers.⁷ Because of the shocking nature of this footage, there was significant public outrage when authorities declined to lay charges against the facility, resulting in several protests.⁸ Those who entered the farm's premises as a part of the protests are now facing charges.⁹

The Cedar Valley footage serves as one more example of the type of animal abuse that appears to be all too common in BC's animal agriculture industry. We urge you to improve government oversight of BC farms to protect the welfare of animals.

The BC SPCA — a donor-funded charitable organization — is responsible for enforcing the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*, RSBC 1996 c. 372 (the “PCA Act”). It has operated under a complaint-based system, but because animals cannot report abuse themselves, in practice there are very few means by which abuse and mistreatment can be brought to the BC SPCA's attention when it takes place behind the closed doors of intensive livestock operations. Furthermore, the standards of care referenced in the PCA Act are themselves largely drafted by industry via the National Farm Animal Care Council (“NFACC”) — a non-governmental organization largely made up of animal agriculture industry groups. Animal Justice was pleased to see the BC SPCA's

⁴ See: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/chilliwack-cattle-sales-to-fire-8-workers-caught-on-tape-abusing-cows-1.2670098>

⁵ See: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/3-men-in-chilliwack-cattle-abuse-scandal-get-jail-time-1.4121997>

⁶ See: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/chicken-catching-service-company-guilty-please-1.6192709>

⁷ See: <https://headlines.peta.org/pigs-british-columbia/>

⁸ See: <https://globalnews.ca/news/5331984/no-charges-abbotsford-hog-farm/>

⁹ See: <https://fraservalleynewsnetwork.com/2021/08/09/back-to-back-thursday-protests-in-abbotsford-re-excelsior-hog-farm/>

announcement that it would be conducting unannounced inspections of 12 farms and ranches this year, but with more than 6,000 farms across the province much more needs to be done to protect farmed animals.

As a result of public backlash following the ^{s.3} the BC SPCA itself wrote to Deputy Agriculture Minister Tom Ethier expressing concern about the state of farmed animal welfare in the province.¹⁰ BC SPCA CEO Craig Daniell called for government mandated regulation and oversight to protect the welfare of farmed animals. He was clear that relying on the BC SPCA to regulate industry via its enforcement function is “a wholly unacceptable situation”. In response to the recent Cedar Valley footage, Mr Daniell once again noted that “huge gaps in accountability...exist on commercial farms” that need to be addressed via significant government action.¹¹

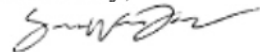
Even unannounced, randomized inspections are unlikely to capture the full extent of abuse that occurs on farms when no one is watching. For instance, farm workers and operators that may beat or otherwise abuse animals are unlikely to do so in the presence of inspectors. Requiring constant video surveillance of farm operations would help ensure that this type of abuse is less of a regular occurrence.

Animal Justice is writing to request that the Ministry of Agriculture take action to implement proactive measures to prevent future abuse. In particular, we recommend the following:

1. Regular unannounced inspections of animal agriculture facilities;
2. Requirements for large farms and slaughterhouses to install video surveillance systems to monitor conditions, with the surveillance feed accessible to the public; and
3. Legally binding standards of care to protect the welfare of farmed animals. These standards should be drafted based on the advice of independent experts rather than NFACC.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to provide further information on these measures and to discuss means of improving the oversight of farmed animal welfare in BC.

Sincerely,



Scott Tinney
Staff Lawyer, Animal Justice
stinney@animaljustice.ca

¹⁰ See: <http://r2klegal.protestarchive.org/docs/2020-11-06-Letter-Daniell-to-Ethier.pdf>

¹¹ See: <https://spca.bc.ca/news/animal-cruelty-fraser-valley-dairy-farm/>

RE: Media Request - CTV on Dairy Farm

From: Townsend, Dave H GCPE:EX <Dave.H.Townsend@gov.bc.ca>
To: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>, Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>, Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>, Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>, Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 5, 2021 11:03:36 AM PDT
Thanks, I'll get back to them and it will give me a chance to remind them about the 12:30 avail as well.

From: Renneberg, Tim AFF:EX <Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 5, 2021 11:02 AM
To: Townsend, Dave H GCPE:EX <Dave.H.Townsend@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Brandt, Alissa GCPE:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Media Request - CTV on Dairy Farm

This is fine, although she will likely get the question at 12:30

Tim Renneberg • Senior Ministerial Advisor • Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Tim.Renneberg@gov.bc.ca
250.387.1023

On Nov 5, 2021, at 10:40 AM, Townsend, Dave H GCPE:EX <Dave.H.Townsend@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Hi Tim,

Alissa and reviewed and approved. Any concerns? Thanks.

Reporter

Cam Mitchell, Assignment Editor
CTV News Vancouver
cameron.mitchell@bellmedia.ca
604-996-4590 c: 604-609-5800
Deadline **ASAP**

Request

I'm hoping to get a question to Minister Popham about a story we're doing today.

Is the Ministry aware of an employee or former employee of Cedar Farms that had an animal cruelty conviction while working at the farm?

AS well, has the Minister seen the video of the alleged abuses at the farm?

Recommendation

- Minister Popham released a statement on Oct. 28, 2021 after she was notified about the allegations at the Fraser Valley dairy farm. The statement is available here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021AFF0064-002064>
- She was not aware of the criminal history of any employees at the Fraser Valley dairy farm, and has not seen the videos in question.

Dave Townsend

Government Communications and Public Engagement

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Office: 250 356-7098 Cell: 250 889-5945

Email: dave.h.townsend@gov.bc.ca

FW: From PETA: Please Close Cedar Valley Farms Immediately

From: Popham.MLA, Lana <Lana.Popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
To: Minister, AFF AFF:EX <AFF.Minister@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 8, 2021 1:44:49 PM PST
Attachments: From PETA re Cedar Valley Farms.pdf, image001.jpg

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

From: Emily Raap <EmilyRa@peta.org>
Sent: November 8, 2021 1:29 PM
To: Marie-Claude.Bibeau@parl.gc.ca; Popham.MLA, Lana <Lana.Popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: From PETA: Please Close Cedar Valley Farms Immediately

Dear Ministers:

Please find the below and attached letter from PETA's Executive Vice President Tracy Reiman and contact me with any response or question.

Sincerely,

Emily Raap



Emily Raap
Campaign Coordinator | PETA
EmilyRa@peta.org

November 8, 2021

The Honorable Lana Popham, British Columbia Minister of Agriculture
The Honorable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Federal Minister of Agriculture

Dear Ministers:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) about recently released footage by Animal Justice that shows extreme abuse of cows and calves at Cedar Valley Farms, an organic dairy farm in Abbotsford, British Columbia. [Video footage](#) shows workers kicking cows and beating them with canes, wrenches, and pitchforks; mother cows bellowing for their newborns after they've been torn away from them and tossed into wheelbarrows; and more. In light of this exposé, we're urging you to shut down this farm immediately.

Workers showed little regard for the animals, many of whom were emaciated and had mobility issues. Some were even pushed or dragged around with heavy machinery while they were unable to move. The gentle giants, who can feel pain and suffer just as dogs, cats, and other animals, were traumatized. Workers have also shot cows multiple times, which is illegal in slaughterhouses, as victims of botched stunning attempts can suffer from tremendous physical pain and psychological terror between the first and final shots. Clearly, nothing has changed since 2014, when seven workers were convicted for abusing animals on a Chilliwack farm, one of whom is shown working in the Cedar Valley Farms footage taken between May and October 2021.

The BC Milk Marketing Board suspended Cedar Valley Farms' license, and the BC SPCA is recommending criminal charges for the serious abuse documented on the farm, which, like conventional dairy farms, treats cows as mere milk machines instead of the complex, feeling beings they actually are.

We hope you'll agree, as all kind and decent people do, that Cedar Valley Farms should be closed permanently to prevent further abuse and neglect. With all the vegan milk products that exist today—including plant-based milks, yogurts, cheeses, and ice creams—there are many delicious and humane products that people can choose from instead of supporting cruelty to animals.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tracy Reiman
Executive Vice President



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

November 8, 2021

The Honorable Lana Popham, British Columbia Minister of
Agriculture
The Honorable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Federal Minister of
Agriculture

Dear Ministers:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) about recently released footage by Animal Justice that shows extreme abuse of cows and calves at Cedar Valley Farms, an organic dairy farm in Abbotsford, British Columbia. [Video footage](#) shows workers kicking cows and beating them with canes, wrenches, and pitchforks; mother cows bellowing for their newborns after they've been torn away from them and tossed into wheelbarrows; and more. In light of this exposé, we're urging you to shut down this farm immediately.

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Washington

1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles

2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk

501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

are many delicious and humane products that people can choose from instead of supporting cruelty to animals.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy Reiman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

Tracy Reiman
Executive Vice President



November 30, 2021

File: 0280-30

Ref: 196539

s.22

Thank you for your email of October 30, 2021 regarding a recent news article on the investigation by the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) of a Fraser Valley dairy farm for alleged animal cruelty. I am shocked and extremely disappointed at the information that has been relayed to me about alleged actions at this farm.

Under BC's *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA) the BC SPCA is mandated to respond to animals in distress and investigate animal welfare concerns, and this is what they are doing. Furthermore, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (the Ministry) is currently working with the BC SPCA to help enable the procedures for farm inspections. As per section 15.1 of the PCAA, the BC SPCA will be exercising its authority to conduct unannounced inspections of regulated activities during business hours.

The Ministry has worked closely with the agricultural commodity boards in British Columbia (B.C.) in encouraging them to adopt and enforce animal welfare and biosecurity standards. As a result, B.C. commodity boards have now made animal care and biosecurity standards mandatory for their producers.

The BC Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) has the authority to regulate the production and marketing of dairy products within B.C. This includes establishing and enforcing animal welfare standards based on the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice.

The BCMMB suspended Cedar Valley Farm's licence on October 27, 2021 based on information provided by the BC SPCA and a subsequent farm inspection. At the time the licence was suspended, the BCMMB put in place independent oversight of animal care on the farm.

.../2

Based on its investigations, the BCMMB confirmed there were violations of the Code of Practice. The farm's licence was conditionally reinstated on November 12, 2021 provided mandatory conditions imposed by the BCMMB are met. A third-party consultant, appointed by the BCMMB will ensure the farm is implementing the animal care and handling practices required by the BCMMB. An independent veterinarian will be engaged to conduct regular herd health and welfare audits. All employees and management are to undertake animal welfare training and sign a cattle care commitment, subject to verification and review. Over the next 12 months, the farm will also be subject to unannounced animal welfare inspections. The BCMMB will consider any further information provided by the BC SPCA during its independent investigation and may add additional licence conditions. BCMMB will be working with the BC Dairy Association to fully review animal welfare policies and procedures, including its farm inspection programs.

Animal welfare is a priority in B.C., and government expects everyone to treat animals with care and respect. B.C. ranchers and livestock producers take great pride in the care they provide their animals and in their role as stewards of the land. I believe the vast majority are meeting the standards in the code.

The Ministry continues to monitor the situation and will take appropriate action as needed to ensure animals are treated with care and respect. The Ministry remains committed to ensuring that animals are respected and treated with a high standard of care in our agricultural system, and we depend upon producers, and concerned citizens like yourself, to help us succeed.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,



Lana Popham
Minister



December 6, 2021

File: 0280-30

Ref: 196616

Tracy Reiman
Executive Vice President
PETA
Email: EmilyRa@peta.org

Dear Tracy Reiman:

Thank you for your letter of November 8, 2021 regarding ethical treatment of animals in agriculture. Animal welfare is a priority in British Columbia (B.C.), and government expects everyone to treat animals with care and respect. We believe the majority of farmers and processors in B.C. are committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of animals in their care. However, we also understand that vigilance is required to ensure the continued enhancement of animal welfare standards in agriculture.

Thank you for the perspectives and suggestions put forward in your letter. There is an investigation being conducted by the commodity board and the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) into the issue in question, which the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (the Ministry) is monitoring closely. Furthermore, the Ministry is working with the BC SPCA in enabling the procedure for unannounced farm inspections. The BC SPCA will be exercising its authority to conduct unannounced inspections of regulated activities during business hours as per section 15.1 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA). As gaps in animal welfare are identified, the Ministry will act appropriately to improve the outcomes.

The Ministry is committed to supporting a rigorous and unbiased investigation into all allegations of animal abuse and the swift discontinuation of actions found to be in violation of a high standard of care. I have directed ministry staff to give careful attention to the situation. The Ministry will act as appropriate to ensure positive animal welfare outcomes.

.../2

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lana Popham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lana" being more prominent and stylized than the last name "Popham".

Lana Popham
Minister

Fwd: Show Cause Hearing Decision for Cedar Valley Farms

From: Peter Donkers <s.22>
To: Ethier, Tom AFF:EX <Tom.Ethier@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 12, 2021 2:12:16 PM PST
Attachments: image001.png

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Tom,

I'm guessing that you have received a copy of this decision via the MMB. In the off-chance that you haven't, please see attached.

Best regards,

Peter

Begin forwarded message:

From: Peter Donkers <s.22>
Date: November 12, 2021 at 1:43:52 PM PST
To: "Gorsuch, Wanda AFF:EX" <Wanda.Gorsuch@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: "Pedersen, Kirsten AFF:EX" <Kirsten.Pedersen@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Show Cause Hearing Decision for Cedar Valley Farms

Yes, Janice Comeau informed MLP of the decision.

On Nov 12, 2021, at 12:38 PM, Gorsuch, Wanda AFF:EX
<Wanda.Gorsuch@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Peter, Kirsten

Was wondering if Ministers Office/DMO was notified of the decision and is aware they can re-direct any person/organization who disagrees with the Milk Board decision to BCFIRB to file an appeal.

Wanda

***This email message, including attachments, is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain legally privileged information. Any unauthorized use, distribution, disclosure, or reproduction is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error please notify sender by return email and delete all copies.**

From: Pedersen, Kirsten AFF:EX <Kirsten.Pedersen@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 12, 2021 8:53 AM

To: Gorsuch, Wanda AFF:EX <Wanda.Gorsuch@gov.bc.ca>; **s.22**
Subject: FW: Show Cause Hearing Decision for Cedar Valley Farms

From: Rob Delage <RDelage@bcmilk.com>
Sent: November 11, 2021 2:33 PM
To: Rich Vanderwal, DVM <**s.22**>
Cc: Janice Comeau <jcomeau@bcmilk.com>; Pedersen, Kirsten AFF:EX
<Kirsten.Pedersen@gov.bc.ca>; Robert Hrabinsky (rhrabinsky@ahb-law.com)
<rhrabinsky@ahb-law.com>
Subject: Show Cause Hearing Decision for Cedar Valley Farms

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Rich,

Please see the attached letter and Show Cause Hearing decision from the BC Milk Marketing Board.

Regards,

Robert Delage, CPA, CMA
General Manager

 200 – 32160 South Fraser Way
Abbotsford BC V2T 1W5
Tel / Fax: 604-854-4475
Toll Free: 1-877-299-6239
rdelage@bcmilk.com



December 1, 2021

File: 0280-30

Ref: 196551

Scott Tinney
Staff Lawyer, Animal Justice
Email: stinney@animaljustice.ca

Dear Scott Tinney:

Thank you for your letter of November 2, 2021 regarding the recent investigation by the B.C. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) of a Fraser Valley dairy farm for alleged animal cruelty and a request to meet to discuss potential farmed animal welfare improvements. I am shocked and extremely disappointed at the information that has been relayed to me about alleged actions at this farm. Government is focussed on addressing the provincial state of emergency resulting from the recent flooding events and I am unable to meet with you at this time.

Under B.C.'s *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA) the BC SPCA is mandated to respond to animals in distress and investigate animal welfare concerns, and this is what they are doing. As per section 15.1 of the PCAA, the BC SPCA will be exercising its authority to conduct unannounced inspections of regulated activities during business hours.

The ministry has worked closely with the agricultural commodity boards in British Columbia (B.C.) in encouraging them to adopt and enforce animal welfare and biosecurity standards. As a result, B.C. commodity boards related to animals have now made animal care and biosecurity standards mandatory for their producers.

The B.C. Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) has the authority to regulate the production and marketing of dairy products within B.C. This includes establishing and enforcing animal welfare standards based on the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice.

.../2

The BCMMB suspended Cedar Valley Farm's licence on October 27, 2021 based on information provided by the BC SPCA and a subsequent farm inspection. At the time the licence was suspended, the BCMMB put in place independent oversight of animal care on the farm.

Based on its initial investigations, the BCMMB confirmed there were violations of the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle. The farm's licence was conditionally reinstated on November 12, 2021, provided mandatory conditions imposed by the BCMMB are met. A third-party consultant, appointed by the BCMMB, will ensure the farm is implementing the animal care and handling practices required by the BCMMB. An independent veterinarian will be engaged to conduct regular herd health and welfare audits. All employees and management are to undertake animal welfare training and cattle handling training and sign a cattle care commitment, subject to verification and review. Over the next 12 months, the farm will also be subject to monthly unannounced animal welfare inspections. The BCMMB will consider any further information provided by the BC SPCA during its independent investigation and may add additional licence conditions. BCMMB will be working with the B.C. Dairy Association to fully review animal welfare policies and procedures, including the BCMMB's farm inspection programs.

Animal welfare is a priority in B.C., and government expects everyone to treat animals with care and respect. The Ministry remains committed to ensuring that animals are respected and treated with a high standard of care in our agricultural system. If gaps in animal welfare are identified, the Ministry will act appropriately to improve outcomes.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,



Lana Popham
Minister

Page 060 of 199 to/à Page 062 of 199

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

I have not been able to figure out where the Dairy/animal welfare one is coming in from but most look the same with only a few that are different. If you'd like an example of that incoming as well, please let me know.

Thanks



JENA RAYNER (She/Her)
Correspondence Coordinator
Deputy Minister's Office
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
778 974-6380 | Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca

From: Rayner, Jena AFF:EX <Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 8, 2021 3:43 PM
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>; Lyttle, Shawna AFF:EX <Shawna.Lyttle@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Writing Campaigns

Good Afternoon,

- Dairy/animal welfare- x 502 incomings (started coming in Nov 5)
- Climate Change -IAF- x 39 incomings (started coming in Nov 1) This particular one in coming in from the Farm Folk City Folk. Mark Raymond forwarded me the link that is going out for people to send an email in from the first attachment.
- Westcoast Olefins- received 32 of the attached- just from the 4th to the 8th, however the MO does have a folder that has incomings from Aug- Nov on the subject (115 total).
 - I've attached the example of the newer incomings that are all being sent in obo of writers by a Dave Wood at GrassNotGas.

I have not been able to figure out where the Dairy/animal welfare one is coming in from but most look the same with only a few that are different. If you'd like an example of that incoming as well, please let me know.

Thanks



JENA RAYNER (She/Her)
Correspondence Coordinator
Deputy Minister's Office
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
778 974-6380 | Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 8, 2021 3:01 PM
To: Lyttle, Shawna AFF:EX <Shawna.Lyttle@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Rayner, Jena AFF:EX <Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca>; Boelens, Robert GCPE:EX <Robert.Boelens@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Writing Campaigns

We have lots of climate KMs as well as KMs on dairy/animal welfare but nothing on West Coast Olefins although if it's about the ALC decision then we'd just use our standard lines about them being independent.

From: Lyttle, Shawna AFF:EX <Shawna.Lyttle@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: November 8, 2021 2:40 PM
To: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Rayner, Jena AFF:EX <Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Writing Campaigns
Importance: High

Hi Brian:

Jena just brought to my attention that there are 3 writing campaigns, which are currently inundating the MO inbox:

- Diary/animal welfare
- Climate Change -IAF
- Westcoast Olefins

I've made Tim aware and he has asked me to reach out to you to get some 'holding lines', then we can chat more tomorrow.

I've copied Jena if you don't mind working with her on providing this language and perhaps Jena can help figure out who is behind the writing campaigns. MO is batching all the incomings now.

Thank you.

Shawna Lyttle (*she/her*)

Manager of Executive Operations and Planning

Deputy Minister's Office | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

T: 778 974-2142

I acknowledge with respect and gratitude that I work and live on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt) and the WSÁNEĆ First Peoples.



January 11, 2022

File: 0280-30

Ref: 196908

s.22

Email: s.22

Dear s.22

Thank you for your email of December 11, 2021 regarding the recent animal abuse uncovered on a Fraser Valley dairy farm. I am extremely disappointed at the actions on this farm.

Under British Columbia's (B.C.) *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA), the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) is mandated to respond to animals in distress and investigate animal welfare concerns. The BC SPCA is exercising this authority and investigating Cedar Valley Farm with regard to the animal abuse uncovered. As well, the B.C. Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) suspended Cedar Valley Farm's licence on October 27, 2021 based on information provided by the BC SPCA investigation and a subsequent farm inspection. At the time the licence was suspended, the BCMMB put in place independent oversight of animal care on the farm.

The BCMMB conditionally reinstated the farm's licence on November 12, 2021 provided mandatory conditions imposed by the BCMMB are met:

- A third-party consultant, appointed by the BCMMB, will ensure the farm is implementing the animal care and handling practices required by the BCMMB.
- An independent veterinarian will be engaged to conduct regular herd health and welfare audits.
- All employees and management are to undertake animal welfare training and sign a cattle care commitment, subject to verification and review.
- Over the next 12 months, the farm will also be subject to unannounced animal welfare inspections.

.../2

The BCMMB will consider any further information provided by the BC SPCA and may add additional licence conditions. In addition, the BCMMB will be working with the B.C. Dairy Association to fully review animal welfare policies and procedures, including its farm inspection programs.

The Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries (the Ministry) will continue to monitor the situation and will take appropriate actions to ensure desired animal welfare outcomes are achieved. Animal welfare is a priority in B.C., and the Ministry remains committed to ensuring that animals are respected and treated with a high standard of care. I believe that B.C. ranchers and livestock producers take great pride in the care they provide their animals and in their role as stewards of the land, and that the majority are meeting the standards set out in the Codes of Practice.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lana Popham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lana" being more prominent than the last name "Popham".

Lana Popham
Minister

FW: Issues notes for review

From: Anderson, Arlene AFF:EX <Arlene.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
To: Todosichuk, Ardice AFF:EX <Ardice.Todosichuk@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: January 17, 2022 10:15:21 AM PST
Attachments: IN_Animal Welfare and on-farm protests_Jan_2022.docx, IN_Mink farms_January 2022.docx
Hi,

I made comments and edits to the Animal Welfare and on-farm protests note. I have nothing to add to the mink note.

Hope these help.

Arlene

From: Todosichuk, Ardice AFF:EX <Ardice.Todosichuk@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: January 14, 2022 4:46 PM
To: Anderson, Arlene AFF:EX <Arlene.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Issues notes for review

See nothing in here that jumps out but just having you take a look
AT

From: Cotton, Brian GCPE:EX <Brian.Cotton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: January 14, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Todosichuk, Ardice AFF:EX <Ardice.Todosichuk@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Issues notes for review

Hi Ardice,

These two issues notes were identified as a couple of the priority notes for session so hoping you can review and let me know if you have any feedback from your end of things by Tuesday. Have a great weekend!

Thank you,
[Brian Cotton](#)
Communications Director

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Phone: (250) 387-9618
Cell: (250) 818-4233

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

FW: Call for Records AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law

From: Anderson, Arlene AFF:EX <Arlene.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
To: Whittington, Elissa AFF:EX <Elissa.Whittington@gov.bc.ca>, Yawney, Lauren AFF:EX <Lauren.Yawney@gov.bc.ca>, Wang, Yichuan AFF:EX <Yichuan.Wang@gov.bc.ca>, Rasmussen, Simon AFF:EX <Simon.Rasmussen@gov.bc.ca>, Remillard, Patrick AFF:EX <Patrick.Remillard@gov.bc.ca>, Giacomazzi, Terri AFF:EX <Terri.Giacomazzi@gov.bc.ca>, Cushing, Jackie AFF:EX <Jackie.Cushing@gov.bc.ca>, Williamson, Connor AFF:EX <Connor.Williamson@gov.bc.ca>, Daniels, Gray AFF:EX <Gray.Daniels@gov.bc.ca>, Cavallin, Sandra L AFF:EX <Sandra.Cavallin@gov.bc.ca>, Edmunds, Sarah AFF:EX <Sarah.Edmunds@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: January 18, 2022 10:39:04 AM PST
Attachments: image003.png, G - Call for Records form.docx
Hi,

Any responsive records. I am not aware of anything that came in from the SPCA on this.

Arlene

From: Norton, Chris AFF:EX <Chris.Norton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: January 10, 2022 3:06 PM
To: McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>; Karod, Suneil AFF:EX <Suneil.Karod@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Graham, Deanna AFF:EX <Deanna.Graham@gov.bc.ca>; AFF FOI AFF:EX <FOI.Agriculture@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Call for Records AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law

Looping in CPPB for any relevant records.

Chris Norton

Executive Administrative Assistant

Science, Policy and Inspection Division | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

☎ (c) (236) 478-1998 | ✉ chris.norton@gov.bc.ca

 **Please consider the environment before printing**

I respectfully acknowledge that I work in the traditional territory of the Lekwungen people.

This includes the Songhees & Esquimalt First Nations whose historical relationship with the land continues to this day.

This e-mail may contain privileged and confidential material and its transmission is not a waiver of that privilege. It is intended for the sole use of the person to whom it is addressed. Any other distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited

From: AFF FOI AFF:EX <FOI.Agriculture@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: January 10, 2022 2:59 PM
To: Evers, Charlene AFF:EX <Charlene.Evers@gov.bc.ca>; Norton, Chris AFF:EX <Chris.Norton@gov.bc.ca>; Zabek, Erin AFF:EX <Erin.Zabek@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: AFF FOI AFF:EX <FOI.Agriculture@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Call for Records AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law

Hello all,

Can you please review the FOI request below and let me know if we have any records? Anything that can be done to expedite this would be greatly appreciated, I mistakenly only sent this to Claire Smid and we are getting a little close to the deadline.

Please let me know if you have any questions

Thank you for your help.

From: IAOFlexTeam@gov.bc.ca <IAOFlexTeam@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: December 9, 2021 8:13 AM

To: AFF FOI AFF:EX <FOI.Agriculture@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Call for Records AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law

Request for Documents for Request # 'AGR-2021-15593'. Your response due date is: 12/23/2021 12:00:00 AM Message from SENDER:

Please see details below regarding this formal request made under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA):

Correspondence (including letters, emails, memos, etc.) sent to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries by the BCSPCA regarding alleged animal abuse / misconduct at Cedar Valley Dairy Farms in Abbotsford, BC (Date Range for Record Search: From 10/10/2021 To 12/6/2021) Date Format is MM/DD/YYYY

Applicant Type: Interest Group

Records Due: December 23, 2021

Legislated Due Date: January 21, 2022

Please email Judy Law at IAOFlexTeam@gov.bc.ca for all questions regarding clarification, deadlines, routinely releasable records, or publicly available records.

Routine Release

Information that can be provided to the applicant without the need for an FOI request under FOIPPA can be "routinely released". If the Ministry deems these records routinely releasable, please respond to this CFR as soon as possible with responsive records, or with the contact information of the individual who will facilitate access. IAO will release the records and/or the contact information of the individual who will facilitate access and close the request. Please contact IAO for advice regarding making this determination.

Fees

If any of the following apply, a fee estimate may be required:

- The search and retrieval time are anticipated to exceed 3 hours;
- The volume of hard-copy records is anticipated to exceed 200 pages;
- Preparation time can reasonably be expected to exceed 15 minutes or more.

If so, please complete Sections 2 and 4 of the CFR, add it to the FOI Fileshare, and then email the IAOFlexTeam@gov.bc.ca using the subject line "AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law - Fee Estimate". For information regarding fee calculation, please refer to the standard Fee Estimate Guidelines.

Load Records to the FOI Fileshare

Please send your completed CFR form and responsive records to IAO via the FOI Fileshare, instead of by email.

- Create a new folder in the FOI Fileshare titled "AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law - Records"
- Copy all responsive records and the completed CFR to the folder
- Send an email to IAOFlexTeam@gov.bc.ca with the subject line "AGR-2021-15593 - Judy Law - CFR Complete"

If you are having difficulties accessing the FOI Fileshare, please contact IAOFlexTeam@gov.bc.ca.

Judy Law, Junior FOI Analyst

IAO Flex Team | Information Access Operations | Ministry of Citizens' Services

Reminder

FOIPPA obligates us to assist every applicant and to respond without delay, openly, accurately, and completely. If the public

body must defend the adequacy of its search to the Information and Privacy Commissioner at Inquiry, those involved in searching for records may be required to sign affidavits confirming they have conducted an adequate search for relevant records.

Thank you,



Section 1: FOI Request Details

General Request ☒

Personal Request ☐

Authorization Received: N/A

Applicant Type: Interest Group

Request Received: December 7, 2021

FOI Analyst: Judy Law

Legislated Due Date: January 21, 2022

Fee Estimate Due: December 16, 2021

Records Due: December 23, 2021

Description: Correspondence (including letters, emails, memos, etc.) sent to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries by the BCSPCA regarding alleged animal abuse / misconduct at Cedar Valley Dairy Farms in Abbotsford, BC (Date Range for Record Search: From 10/10/2021 To 12/6/2021)

Section 2: Initial Records Assessment

Do you hold responsive records? YES ☐ NO ☐

If no, please provide an explanation that can be given to the applicant (if applicable):

Are you aware of other records that may be responsive to this request within your public body? YES ☐ NO ☐

Are you aware of other records that may be responsive to this request held by another public body? YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes, specify:

Section 3: No Records Response Approval

Please forward to public body FOI contact (if applicable) for delegated head's final public body approval if no records have been located

Final public body approval (full name and title):	Signature:	Date: Date
---	------------	------------

Section 4: Fee Estimate – General request only (if this is a personal request skip to section 5)

Please ensure that all reasonable efforts are made to generate as accurate an estimate as possible	Estimated Hours	Actual Hours
Locating/Retrieving – this includes searching all relevant sources. Areas to consider searching include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Outlook (including 'deleted' and 'sent' folders)Records management systems (ex. EDRMS)LAN, shared drives, SharePoint, databasesOffsite records		
Producing – this only applies where you are creating records from other sources* (e.g. developing a program to create new records from a database) and tasks include		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifying relevant sources of data/informationManual time spent creating and producing records		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ex: generating a custom report from a database using existing data 		
Preparing – this may include time spent by IAO (for electronic records) or the Ministry (for hardcopy records) and tasks include		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converting records to PDF Consolidating records into a single PDF document Organizing records packages (e.g. by date department, staff, records type, etc.) Photocopying or scanning records into electronic format Ensuring completeness of responsive records Copying other types of media (audio and/or video) <p>For electronic records, you do not need to provide a time estimate, please provide the number of files where requested below and IAO will be in a position to calculate the time required and to consider charging a fee.</p>		
Volume – for electronic records please provide the estimated number of files and for hardcopy records please continue to provide the number of pages		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Files (e.g. emails, Word Docs, Excel sheets, PDFs, photos, etc.) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hardcopy records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average file folder = 1" and holds approx. 200 pages (single-sided) 1 standard Records Centre Services box: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal sized folders = 1800 pages Letter sized folders = 2200 pages 		
Suggestions for possible narrowing:		

Section 5: Search Summary

Please describe the search for records including what records were searched, (e.g., files, email, databases, EDRMS, offsite records, etc.) duration of search time, and who conducted the search for records:

--

Section 6a: Program Area Harms Assessment

Harm – **disclosure of the records would significantly harm the public body’s position, or a third party’s interests on a given topic.** The harms assessment allows FOI staff to better understand the context of the records and make informed severing recommendations based on potential harms. Issues associated with possible disclosure through the FOI process that are unrelated to the harms assessment should be communicated to your public body executive and/or Government Communications and Public Engagement office.

- Please reference the applicable records and information of concern, the harms, and associated page numbers below.
- If any of these records have been prepared for, or created to inform a decision of Cabinet or any of its committees, section 12 (Cabinet confidences) may apply. Please identify the applicable records and advise (1) what is the status of the issue? And (2) has the decision been made public or implemented?

Could the release of any/all of the responsive records potentially cause harm? YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes, which information, if released, may cause harm?

Section 6b: Publication on Open Information (if this is a personal request skip to section 7)

General requests only - Unless specific [exemption criteria](#) apply, records provided to the applicant in response to this request will be published on the Government’s [Open Information](#) website. **If you have any concerns about the publication of the responsive records please indicate here or discuss with your FOI Analyst:**

Section 7: Contact Information

Who completed this form (full name and title):	Phone Number:	Date: Date
Harms Assessment completed by (full name and title):	Program Area:	
Harms Assessment approved by (full name and title):		

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s.13

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Date: January 2022
Minister Responsible: Lana Popham

Animal welfare and on-farm protests/trespassing

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Ensuring animals are treated ethically and with care is a priority for our government.
- That's why we adopted the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice as reasonable and generally accepted management practices to strengthen animal welfare in B.C.
- The Codes outline management practices such as animal handling, feed and water, housing, health and welfare management, and other practices.
- Under B.C.'s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCAA), the BC SPCA is mandated to respond to animals in distress and investigate animal welfare concerns.
- The Ministry worked closely with the agricultural commodity boards in B.C. to ensure they made the animal welfare and biosecurity standards outlined in the Codes mandatory for their producers.
- With respect to extreme weather events like the heat dome and floods, I understand from our commodity boards and the BC Farm Industry Review Board, and in talking directly to farmers, that many took proactive measures to ensure the welfare of their animals and others are now looking at proactive measures to better deal with future events.
- We continue to work with animal welfare stakeholders to identify opportunities and monitor potential issues to ensure robust animal welfare policies are in place in B.C.

Activism/on-farm protests

- Our government fully respects the rights of people to peacefully protest.
- At the same time, we expect everyone to follow the law.

- **Extreme actions such as trespassing, sabotaging farm equipment, and social media threats are offside with how we conduct ourselves and treat each other in a civilized society, and often illegal.**
- **Farmers, ranchers and food processors in B.C. must be able to conduct their work free of harassment and intimidation.**
- **It is unacceptable to have our farmers being subject to activities that impact their wellbeing and the welfare of their animals.**
- **The ministry has met with B.C. farmers to hear their very valid concerns and is working on developing resources to support farmers in the case of trespassers on their property.**
- **We've had good discussions through our multiple Animal Activism Roundtables and we will continue to engage with farmers as we work towards effective solutions.**
- **Anyone with concerns about animal welfare should contact the BC SPCA directly as they are mandated under B.C.'s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to respond to animals in distress and investigate any concerns.**
- **B.C. has among the strongest penalties in Canada for causing distress to an animal, up to \$75,000 and 24 months in prison, and action can be taken against anyone who causes distress to an animal.**

BACKGROUND/KEY FACTS:

Animal welfare concerns

There have been several high-profile animal welfare cases that have received media coverage and public scrutiny in recent years. This has led to repeated calls to government from both the BC SPCA and other animal welfare advocates to have a more robust inspection system to ensure standards of care are being met.

Currently, the SPCA is mandated under B.C.'s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to investigate animal welfare concerns; however, they have publicly called for a third-party inspection system to be put in place. The BC SPCA conducted a limited number of unannounced inspections in summer 2021 for each of the main commodity groups and found no concerns. The Ministry has been engaged in dialogue with the BC SPCA, the BC Agriculture Council and farming organizations to support the development of an inspection system that is fair, and that all parties can understand and support.

The most recent example of animal cruelty profiled in the media was the seizure of 216 beef cows by the BC SPCA from a Shawnigan Lake farm who had been neglected and had terrible living conditions. The cows were moved to an undisclosed location after the owner failed to comply with orders from the BC SPCA to address a wide range of issues. BC SPCA is recommending animal cruelty charges to Crown counsel.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

This follows another set of videos that were released in fall 2021 video showing abuse of cows at a Chilliwack dairy farm. Animal Justice, a non-profit animal rights group, sent the videos to BC SPCA before they were released to media. The BC SPCA investigation is ongoing but in response to the initial videos, the following occurred:

- The BC Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) suspended Cedar Valley Farm's licence on Oct. 27, 2021, based on information provided by the BC SPCA investigation and a subsequent farm inspection, and put in place independent oversight of animal care on the farm.
- The BCMMB confirmed there were violations of the Codes. The farm's licence was conditionally reinstated on November 12, 2021 provided mandatory conditions imposed by the BCMMB are met.
- A third-party consultant, appointed by the BCMMB, will ensure the farm is implementing the animal care and handling practices required.
- An independent veterinarian will be engaged to conduct regular herd health and welfare audits.
- All employees and management are to undertake animal welfare training and sign a cattle care commitment, subject to verification and review.
- Over the next 12 months, the farm will also be subject to unannounced animal welfare inspections.
- BCMMB will be working with the B.C. Dairy Association to fully review animal welfare policies and procedures, including its farm inspection programs.

There have been similar videos released over the past several years showing conditions at farms of pork and egg producers; these videos have raised public concerns over the welfare of animals on large farms. In September 2021, a Chilliwack-based chicken-catching company entered two guilty pleas in connection with a case stemming from a CFIA investigation into abuse allegations at multiple B.C. farms. In 2018, 38 federal charges were laid against Elite Farm services, the owner, and Ontario-based Sofina Foods Inc. Sofina, which sells chicken under the Lilydale brand, had hired Elite to catch the poultry.

Animal welfare advocates and the SPCA also voiced their concern about 650,000 animals (mostly chickens) dying during last June's heat wave BCFIRB indicated many farmers took proactive measures and will continue to take ongoing measures based on lessons learned during the extreme heat dome but won't be investigating. According to the BC Chicken Marketing Board the average weekly slaughter is 2.2 million birds.

Activism and on-farm protests

Several cases of extreme animal activism have occurred in the past years, including trespass, on-property protesting and refusal to leave, animal release, posting images of farm children online, and verbal and on-line threats. Animal activists have also used tactics such as derogatory posters, interrupting conferences, and fake media releases to highlight their position.

One of the most high-profile incidents was at an Abbotsford hog farm in April 2019, where activists trespassed and hid cameras throughout the barn recording the activities of family members and employees. Subsequently, over 150 activists took part in a protest and 50 individuals trespassed onto the farm. Following the protest, edited video from the hidden cameras circulated on multiple social and mainstream media platforms. The BC SPCA investigated to determine if the farm contravened B.C. animal protection laws; however, no charges were recommended due to insufficient evidence. Four activists face charges, including break-and-enter and mischief, as a result of the protest.

In October 2019, Ministers Popham, Farnworth and Eby committed to helping farmers advance the necessary changes to strengthen the rules around protection against trespassing and other illegal actions related to animal welfare. In Fall 2020, the BC Chicken Growers Association wrote a letter to the ministers saying that progress had been stalled and action was still needed. The Opposition continues to call for more action to be taken.

Responsibility for B.C.'s biosecurity and animal welfare legislation rests with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and there is currently a draft Animal Activism Action Plan that will help start discussion between the ministry, other branches of government and external stakeholders regarding further mitigation of animal activism impact on B.C. livestock producers.

Government Action on Animal Welfare

On June 1, 2019, the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice were referenced in regulation as "reasonable and generally accepted practices of animal management" in B.C. The Codes outline practices for livestock and farm animal operators, including owners, managers, and employees. Under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, failure to abide by the Codes is not necessarily an offence, but following the Codes is a defence from conviction of animal distress. Referencing the Codes in regulation therefore provides an incentive to farmers and ranchers to follow these practices.

The Codes referenced in regulation cover beef, bison, hatching eggs, poultry breeders, chickens and turkeys, equines, farmed fox, farmed mink, pigs, pullets and laying hens, rabbits, sheep and veal cattle. The Dairy Code of Practice was referenced in regulation in July 2015.

The BC Farm Industry Review Board (BCFIRB), an independent tribunal, is responsible for ensuring B.C.'s commodity boards deliver sound marketing policy in the public interest. This includes ensuring animal welfare and biosecurity are managed in a way to ensure orderly marketing. BCFIRB also hears appeals of specific animal seizure and/or cost decisions of the BC SPCA under the PCAA to provide timely, animal welfare-focused decisions.

Animal Welfare response due to COVID-19

In June 2020, animal welfare funding was made available out of contingencies to ensure animals in a variety of animal facilities received the care they needed during COVID-19. Funding was available for food, animal hygiene, habitat upkeep, veterinarian care, limited transportation, and repairs to equipment required to ensure the welfare of the animals in care. 24 animal care facilities received a total of \$4.2 million.

FW: Cedar Valley and SPCA

From: Paton, Ian s.17
To: Popham, Lana s.17
Cc: Pokorny, Peter AFF:EX <Peter.Pokorny@gov.bc.ca>, Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 6, 2022 8:35:01 AM PDT
Attachments: Letter.pdf, AnonymousLetter-Feb22.pdf, spcanoticeofdamage.docx

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Good Morning Minister Popham ... I was contacted this morning by s.3 and he was concerned that the (three) accompanying letters of support were not opened and read . I provided his contact information the other day and he has since suggested that a meeting sometime after the two week break would be much appreciated . Hopefully your staff have been in touch .

Much appreciated Ian

s.21; s.22

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.21 ; s.22

Fwd: Cedar Valley and SPCA

From: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX
To: McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 6, 2022 9:37:40 AM PDT
Attachments: Letter.pdf, spcanoticeofdamage.docx, AnonymousLetter-Feb22.pdf

Arif Lalani, ADM, MInistry of Agriculture and Food

Sent from iPhone

From: Paton, Ian <s.17>
Sent: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 8:35:01 AM
To: Popham, Lana <s.17>
Cc: Pokorny, Peter AFF:EX <Peter.Pokorny@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Cedar Valley and SPCA

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Good Morning Minister Popham ... I was contacted this morning by s.3 and he was concerned that the (three) accompanying letters of support were not opened and read . I provided his contact information the other day and he has since suggested that a meeting sometime after the two week break would be much appreciated . Hopefully your staff have been in touch .

Much appreciated Ian

s.21; s.22

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.21 ; s.22

February 25, 2022

Lana Popham, MLA,
Minister of Agriculture,
Room 325 - 501 Belleville Street,
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

Dear Ms. Lana Popham,

s.22 showed me a letter she wrote you and others last week about the organic dairy farm. She is correct, there's a lot wrong. We are proud to run riot, but we all know this one is vile. We all know about the video editing. Deepfake is just software, and I know we have people.
s.22

Guess the dairy people don't lie enough or aren't corrupt enough to keep up with the SPCA.

You say you stand up for farmers - do with it what you want. I should sign this, but I guess I still want to fit in and must be a bit of a coward – you are the Minister of Agriculture, figure it out.

s.22

cc: Marcia Moriarty SPCA

cc: Cedar Valley Farm

From: Christine Carey - APO, Lower Mainland - BC SPCA
Sent: November 1, 2021 7:33 PM
To: s.3 <s.22>
Subject: Re: Cedar Valley

Hello s.3 and thanks so much for your email and for this information. I was so sorry to read about the distress that s.22 and very glad that s.22

I have forwarded your message and invitation to my Manager and will leave that response up to them. Speaking with everyone involved in this investigation is certainly something we will wish to do, in due course.

I appreciate your cooperation and willingness to find solutions.

Regards,

Christine Carey
Special Provincial Constable
Animal Protection Officer
Cruelty Investigations Department
BC SPCA
1245 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5T 1R1
604.841.4994 Cell
604.575.2924 Fax
1.855.622.7722 • ccarey@spca.bc.ca • spca.bc.ca

Guardian to Tarzan (RIP), Cedar and Nala

"I think using animals for food is an ethical thing to do, but we've got to do it right. We've got to give those animals a decent life and we've got to give them a painless death. We owe the animal respect." — **Temple Grandin**

Respectfully acknowledging that I work on, and this email was sent from, the unceded traditional territory of the Stó:lō people, specifically the Semá:th (Sumas) and Mathéxwí (Matsqui) First Nation whose historical relationships to the land continues today

OUR MISSION: *To protect and enhance the quality of life for domestic, farm and wild animals in British Columbia.*

*The BC SPCA is a not-for-profit organization reliant on donations from the public.
Charitable Tax # BN 11881 9036 RR0001*

This message and any attachments or links are for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain privileged and confidential information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify us immediately and destroy the original message. Thank you.

From: s.3 s.22
Sent: October 31, 2021 10:34 AM
To: Christine Carey - APO, Lower Mainland - BC SPCA <ccarey@spca.bc.ca>
Subject: Cedar Valley

Dear Christine,
As a follow up to Wednesday.
s.21; s.22

s.3
s.22

February 11, 2022

Lana Popham, MLA,
Minister of Agriculture,
Room 325 - 501 Belleville Street,
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

Dear Ms. Popham

This is not OK anymore.

I love my vegan life. I love most of my vegan friends. I have some activist friends. I got excited about their passion to let all animals live free.

I hate that we took something bad in the Abbotsford flood and took pictures to "prove" all animal farming is cruel. To make it not bad but make it evil. It's just not true. Many farmers risked their lives to save animals and help their farmer neighbours. Now a bunch of my vegan friends are going nuts anti-vaxx on me. Its all fun. Then its not.

As the Minister of Agriculture, I want you to know that Cedar Valley dairy is getting screwed. When the 3 guys took the farm videos, we were excited. But I know s.22 and others edited those clips. What CTV got isn't all real. What the SPCA has for video includes fake shit. It's the worst kept secret in our group. I think even the SPCA knows, but they want the money.

We have assignments to call up and insult anyone known to be with Cedar Valley. It's just abuse. The number I got was answered by a lady that sounded young, and she just started crying when I went off on her. I am shit. Now I'm sure the farmers are just people trying to do their best. And we just get to lie and cheat and personally crap on them? To decide how we all eat?

What are we doing?

This is not OK anymore.

Now it's farm family abuse.
And we are the corrupt ones.

Who's next? We are told they are corporations, but they are farm families and people. Can we all just stop the lies?

s.22

cc: Marcia Moriarty SPCA
cc: Cedar Valley Farm

RE: Cedar Valley and SPCA

From: Pokorny, Peter AFF:EX <Peter.Pokorny@gov.bc.ca>
To: Paton, s.17
Cc: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>, Evers, Charlene AFF:EX <Charlene.Evers@gov.bc.ca>, Sundhu, Ellora AF:EX <Ellora.Sundhu@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 7, 2022 4:33:41 AM PDT

Hi MLA Paton – Thanks for reaching out. I am currently in Toronto for FPT meetings but will be contacting s.3 to set up a discussion for early/mid next week.

Thanks,
Peter

Peter Pokorny
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Food

From: Paton, Ian s.17
Sent: April 6, 2022 8:35 AM
To: Popham, Lana s.17
Cc: Pokorny, Peter AFF:EX <Peter.Pokorny@gov.bc.ca>; Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Cedar Valley and SPCA

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Good Morning Minister Popham ... I was contacted this morning by s.3 and he was concerned that the (three) accompanying letters of support were not opened and read . I provided his contact information the other day and he has since suggested that a meeting sometime after the two week break would be much appreciated . Hopefully your staff have been in touch .

Much appreciated Ian

s.21; s.22

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.21 ; s.22

Fwd: Cedar Valley and SPCA

From: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX
To: McGuire, Jennifer AFF:EX <Jennifer.Mcguire@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 7, 2022 9:45:12 AM PDT

Arif Lalani, ADM, MInistry of Agriculture and Food

Sent from iPhone

From: Pokorny, Peter AFF:EX <Peter.Pokorny@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 7, 2022 4:33 AM
To: 'Paton, Ian' s.17
Cc: Lalani, Arif AFF:EX <Arif.Lalani@gov.bc.ca>; Evers, Charlene AFF:EX <Charlene.Evers@gov.bc.ca>; Sundhu, Ellora AF:EX <Ellora.Sundhu@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Cedar Valley and SPCA

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s.21; s.22

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s.21 ; s.22

Page 184 of 199 to/à Page 199 of 199

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13