

Schlutter, Debby CITZ:EX

From: office@bcchickengrowers.ca
Sent: September 30, 2020 10:21 AM
To: Minister, AGRI AGRI:EX
Cc: Minister, AG AG:EX; Minister, PSSG PSSG:EX; Paton.MLA, Ian LASS:EX; Eby.MLA, David LASS:EX; Popham.MLA, Lana LASS:EX; Farnworth.MLA, Mike LASS:EX
Subject: BC Ministers' Statements on Animal Welfare - October 28,2019
Attachments: 20-09-30 BCCGA letter to Ag Minister re Animal Activism.pdf

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

Good morning,

Please see attached letter from the BC Chicken Growers' Association.

Thank you.

Margret Duin | Administrator
BC Chicken Growers' Association
PO Box 581
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z8

Phone: 604 859-9332
Email: office@bcchickengrowers.ca





BC Chicken Growers'
ASSOCIATION

September 30, 2020

BY EMAIL

AGR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

BC Minister of Agriculture
PO Box 9043 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister,

RE: BC Ministers' Statements on Animal Welfare – October 28, 2019

The BC Chicken Growers' Association (BCCGA) would like to raise our concerns about the potential threat to BC farms by animal activists. Our concerns are shared by other livestock producers throughout the province.

We were all thrilled at the 2019 Agriculture Day reception when the current Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham, British Columbia's Attorney General David Eby and Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, stood in front of farmers to make proclamations with a commitment to help farmers.

Minister Lana Popham:

"I have back-up from British Columbia's Attorney General and the Solicitor General, and these are the men responsible for B.C.'s laws and responsible for their enforcement.

So, let me be clear, this government is working hard to deter those who are illegally harassing and intimidating farmers and ranchers. We are working hard to deter people who trespass on your property and damage your farm equipment and endanger the animals in your care. We understand the current rules are not stopping illegal protesting activity and we have already taken a number of steps to address this problem."

From: Ministers' Statements on Animal Welfare: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/stories/ministers-statements-on-animal-welfare>

Since the 2019 Agriculture Days in Victoria, almost a year ago, very little progress has been made. We have had two round table meetings with the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and others, but we have seen very little progress on the legislative front.

The Ministry of Agriculture recently stated that a legislative change in the BC Legislature could take one to one and a half years. In the past half year, the provincial governments in Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan have managed to fast track the legislative process and have enacted strong laws to protect their farmers and their families. The provincial government in Manitoba is now working on similar legislative changes.

P.O. Box 581, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z8

tel 604.859.9332 | www.poultryinmotion.ca | office@bcchickengrowers.ca

Meanwhile, several of our poultry farmers have found intruders in their barns late at night. These illegal break-ins jeopardize the safety and health of the birds and could jeopardize the entire BC poultry industry if trespassers introduce a disease into the barns such as avian influenza. In 2004, BC's poultry barns were emptied due to avian influenza and BC had to import poultry products.

The illegal actions of these trespassers put our farmers at risk. Broiler chicken production is one of the top three agricultural commodities in BC. There are 308 chicken growers located primarily in the Fraser Valley, the Interior and Vancouver Island. Annually they produce more than 117 million birds or 255 million kg. The BC chicken sector provides 12,625 jobs and contributes \$1.1 billion to the GDP with farm cash receipts of \$519 million in 2019. British Columbia holds 14% of the national allocation and is the third largest in provincial chicken production behind Ontario and Quebec.

All BC chicken farms are regulated and certified under the national 'Raised by a Canadian Farmer' Animal Care Program which is based on the Code of Practice and recognized by the National Farm Animal Care Council. BC Chicken farmers are subject to regular on-farm audits. The program has strict enforcement measures to offer additional assurance. Raising healthy birds in a humane way is very important to BC Farmers.

The BCCGA realizes that there are people opposed to animal agriculture and that they have a right to peaceful protests. We are asking for stronger trespassing legislation from the province for those activists who come onto our farms (private property), come armed with tools to break into our barns, cause malicious damage, steal our animals, endanger the physical and mental health of our family and workers, and jeopardize our very way of living and raising food for British Columbia. It is not right that our chicken farmers are being threatened for trying to feed British Columbians.

Over the past years, and especially during the current pandemic, many elected provincial officials have spoken about the importance of BC agriculture producing food for British Columbians.

The Federal Minister of Agriculture Marie-Claude Bibeau has stated

"Trespassing legislation needs to be enacted at the provincial level, but I'm following it closely because this is something that I care about. This is not acceptable, that our farmers are being threatened for feeding us."

We are asking the Government of British Columbia to take action to protect BC farmers and farms and make stricter trespassing legislation a priority. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Dale Krahn
President, BC Chicken Growers' Association

cc. BC Attorney General
BC Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
BC Official Opposition Critic for Agriculture and Food

P.O. Box 581, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z8