



#6, 11010 - 46<sup>th</sup> Street SE  
Calgary, AB T2C 1G4  
Tel 403-769-1519  
Fax 403-209-3255

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Mr. Malcolm Allen  
NDP Critic – Agriculture  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

October 3, 2014

Dear Mr. Allen

On behalf of the National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA), I am writing to express our concern for the nature of the debate we are observing in the House of Commons on the issue of the Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) Program.

We appreciate your ongoing interest in our sector and your understanding the interconnected nature of the beef value chain. As such, we know you will appreciate the concerns we raise accordingly.

We have had past opportunities to discuss with you the importance of the Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) Program to the beef sector and thus we respectfully request that you to share this perspective with your caucus colleagues so that they may have a broader understanding of the unique labour needs in the agriculture sector.

Since the return of Parliament in September, we witness your colleagues making blanket statements in the House of Commons about the TFW program - including ongoing claims that the program displaces Canadian workers. We take exception to these statements, as they do not reflect the reality of the beef sector as well as many other sectors.

The cattle feeding sector is committed to the employment of Canadian workers and continues to actively and diligently recruit Canadian workers on our feedlots. However, our industry suffers from an acute and immediate labour shortage, mainly in the prairie region. The TFW program has served only as a means to augment the Canadian feedlot workforce, not replace it.

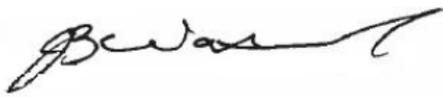
We are in the business of caring for live animals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days of the year. Labour shortages are not an option if animal care standards are to be met.

Labour shortages are a reality on our feedlots due to a number of factors including an aging workforce, the rural location of our employers, a lack of applicants with the appropriate animal care skills, and a high degree of turnover and competition from other sectors.

When Minister Kenney announced changes in June to the TFW program, cattle feeders were exempted from some elements, as we are included in the 'Agriculture Stream' of the program. However, the beef-processing sector is not exempt and their ability to process the cattle we are producing is severely impeded due to these changes. The labour shortages in the processing plants are very real and the changes to the TFW program will directly result in reduced processing capacity. As you know, the beef value chain is interconnected in a manner such that a negative economic impact on one part of the chain has a direct impact on all players.

**The NCFA calls upon you to raise to your caucus the realities of the labour shortages in our sector and the importance of the TFW program. We ask that you draw the attention of your caucus to the negative impact their comments in the House of Commons are having on the public's perceptions of our sector, as well as discouraging potential amendments to the TFW program that could ensure the beef sector remains competitive and sustainable in Canada.**

Thank you for your support on this critical issue.



Sincerely,  
Jeff Warrack  
Chairman

cc Tom Mulcair – Leader of the Official Opposition  
Linda Duncan, NDP Critic - WED  
Jinny Sims, NDP Critic – Employment and Social Development  
Alexandre Boulerice, NDP Critic - Labour