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Holiday Greetings

As we enter into the holiday season, I want to take a moment to reflect on my first couple weeks at the helm of the Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association (ACFA). Not only has it been a busy time with lots of meetings and events, there's been a number of important decisions that have been made.

Bryan has been a strong leader for this organization and is leaving me with big shoes to fill. To start, I created a 90-day plan focused on meeting as many key stakeholders as possible. Over the last six weeks, with the help of Bryan, staff and my Board of Directors, I have been out and about and have met with over:

- 35 federal MPs, the Minister of Agriculture, and ministerial aides and staff at the NCFA lobby day
- 12+ provincial NDP MLAs, Ministers of Agriculture and Energy, Chief of Staff and aides
- Deputy Ministers of Agriculture & Forestry and Economic Development, as well as two ADMs of Agriculture
- Over half a dozen UCP MLAs and candidates
- Numerous key stakeholders including CCA, ABP, RMA, ILWG, NRCB, CBBC, CRSB, BVCRT, CAFTA, and others
- Toured the Solvet plant, Lethbridge Research Station and Harmony Beef
- Met with several federal and provincial regulators and bureaucrats
- Not including my Board of Directors, I have met one-on-one with over eight ACFA members

In the next few months, my goal is to continue to focus on meeting my members with a view to listening to your priorities, beefs and bouquets. And as you know, January is the start of our annual membership drive. My sincere desire is to continue to bring value for this organization and its members. I hope to talk to each and every one of you, and if you want your voice to be heard, my 'door' is always open (cell: 403-542-5830).

As I mentioned, there were many decisions in the last while. An agreement with the United States under the USMCA is well underway, and tariff barriers are coming down under the CPTPP. Of note was the decision by beef producers to keep the check-off refundable. Coming in with fresh eyes, I see this as both an opportunity and an opportunity lost.

The opportunity is the chance to work more collaboratively with the Alberta Beef Producers (ABP). There's been a clear signal from both Boards that this is a direction they want to be heading. A meeting of the two boards is scheduled for January and I believe that this will be the start of us working more closely to reduce duplication and become more aligned on advocacy, issues and events.

The opportunity lost, from my perspective, is the Alberta Beef Industry Development Fund. With the increase in check-off dollars that was to be allocated to this fund, the industry could have had an opportunity to make major investments into critical research and development. But my hope is that this opportunity is not completely lost. Collectively, I believe ABP and ACFA can continue to work together along with other industry and government partners to ensure we maximize on good opportunities to advance our Alberta advantage for cattle production.

In closing, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year!

Jan Tranberg
President & CEO