



2025 FEDERAL ELECTION

**ELECTION TOOLKIT FOR
BEEF FARMERS**



PRODUCER CALL TO ACTION

With the 2025 federal election date of April 28th, 2025 quickly approaching, we need to build awareness of the current challenges and opportunities facing the Canadian and Ontario beef sectors.

This toolkit has been put together to assist Ontario farmers and industry representatives during engagements with federal candidates on sector priorities, prior to the election.

Every conversation between farmers and local candidates increases the awareness of the beef and broader agri-food sector and our associated opportunities and challenges.

Producers are encouraged to take the time to reach out to local candidates of all stripes through attendance at all-candidate meetings and/or one-on-one meetings and other riding and community events. Additionally, producers can engage candidates through social media, email, written letters or phone calls. Reaching out and building a connection with local candidates will provide us a better understanding of each political party's plans and commitments for agriculture in the future.

If you speak with a candidate, please contact the BFO office and let us know how it went. We are keenly interested in the outcomes of your conversations during the 2025 federal election campaign.

FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION & SUPPORT



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ONTARIO BEEF SECTOR OVERVIEW

Agriculture is the backbone of our rural communities and is important to the quality of life of all Canadians and Ontarians. There are approximately 19,000 beef farmers in Ontario, representing 13.7 per cent of all farms in the province, most of which are multi-generational family-run operations. Beef farms and the broader beef cattle sector have a presence and economic impact in every county and district in Ontario.

ECONOMY

The beef sector is an important economic driver of Ontario's agri-food sector. Combining the revenue from primary production, processing and retail, the beef sector contributes \$2.69 billion to Ontario's GDP on an annual basis. Gross sales from Ontario beef production, processing and retail exceed \$13 billion, with revenue from farm gate sales reaching \$1.4 billion, processing at \$3.5 billion and retail surpassing \$9 billion. The income derived from the beef sector helps support a broad range of rural infrastructure such as hospitals, schools and community centres.

EMPLOYMENT

Ontario's beef sector is vitally important to the well-being and growth of families, businesses and communities, both rural and urban. As a significant job creator, Ontario's beef industry is responsible for 9,500 jobs in primary production, 9,000 jobs in processing and 43,900 jobs in retail. In total, Ontario's beef sector sustains more than 61,000 jobs. Beef farms provide a wide variety of jobs between on-farm (equipment operation, breeding and feeding) and off-farm (farm machinery sales, grocer sales, meat packaging and processing, and transportation).

ENVIRONMENT

As long-term partners with the environment, more than 70 per cent of Ontario farmers have taken an environmental course, evaluated their farm's environmental footprint, and made improvements to protect soil, water and ecosystems. In addition, grasslands used in beef production help store approximately 1.9 billion tonnes of carbon in Canada. We're proud to say that due to improved production practices, producing 1 kilogram of beef in Canada today emits 15 per cent fewer greenhouse gases than it did in 2014. The Ontario beef sector maintains one of the lowest GHG footprints of all beef production systems in the world – less than half of the global average.



PRIORITY ISSUES FOR THE ONTARIO BEEF SECTOR

TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE ONTARIO BEEF SECTOR

1. Defend Canada's trading relationship with the United States and vigorously oppose any U.S. tariffs on Canadian agri-food products, specifically cattle, beef and beef products.
2. Seek a permanent increase in the interest-free limit under the Advance Payments Program (APP) of at least \$250K.
3. Harmonize Canadian SRM removal requirements with the U.S.
4. Remove the 100-day residency requirement with the U.S.
5. Seek an ELD exemption for a 240 km radius around origin and destination for livestock transport.
6. Advocate for increased investment in meat processing capacity focused on increasing access to infrastructure grants, access to labour and skills training, and market development support.
7. Continue to encourage Corrections Canada and CFIA to find a path to reopening the Joyceville Penitentiary Abattoir.
8. Pursue improvements to the Restricted Feeder Cattle Program to make it easier to exit the program, and to more easily allow cattle movements beyond direct-to-processing in emergency situations (plant or border closure, human health emergency, etc.).



CANADA-U.S. TRADE DISPUTE 2025

RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE ONTARIO BEEF SECTOR

CANADIAN COUNTERMEASURES/RETALITORY TARIFFS

- BFO supports the application of countermeasures/tariffs applied on U.S. imports into Canada in response to U.S. tariffs that are or may be applied, and only if they are applied.
- BFO recommends live cattle (bovine), and critical farm input products including veterinary drugs, seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, and farm equipment be removed from the list.
- To ensure that Canadian beef processors are not put at a further disadvantage within our own domestic markets, BFO supports the application of counter tariffs on beef and beef products imported into Canada from the U.S.

MARKETING AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

- Provide industry and meat processors with marketing and promotional dollars to run domestic “buy Canadian/Ontario” campaigns and enhance domestic market access.
- Eliminate HST on all Ontario/Canadian products sold in restaurants.
- Subsidize or incentivize publicly funded institutions to purchase Ontario or Canadian product in lieu of imported products.
- Provide non-repayable grants to federal processors to develop new markets outside of the U.S.
- Eliminate interprovincial trade barriers for provincial meat inspection systems that meet at least the Ontario meat inspection standard, or a comparable standard that includes HACCP principles and a formal third-party inspection process.

COST RELIEF AND COMPETITIVENESS

- Implement measures to ensure existing processors remain viable and operational. This could include tax relief measures, employment assistance and other direct support.
- Create a tariff rebate program to compensate exporters for tariff costs incurred on exports to the U.S. The rebate rate should not incentivize export of products that would otherwise be marketed domestically. As a result, BFO suggests a rebate of up to 90 per cent of the value of the tariff paid to reduce concerns about potential moral hazard.
- Immediately harmonize Canada’s Specified Risk Material (SRM) policies with those in the U.S. Current SRM removal requirements in Canada cost Canadian processors more than \$30 million per year in lost value.



TIPS ON COMMUNICATING WITH MP CANDIDATES

BE AWARE OF TIME. You may only have a few minutes to get your point across.

BE ASSERTIVE. Know what you want in advance and ask for it.

BE DIRECT. State the purpose of your meeting clearly and highlight our sector's key issues.

BE INFORMATIVE. Refer to information in this toolkit and stick to the facts.

BE POLITICAL. Explain your hometown's relevance to the beef sector i.e. how Ontario's beef industry contributes to the local economy.

PERSONALIZE YOUR MESSAGE. Relate our sector priorities to your own story as a beef farmer and support it with BFO's speaking points. Your personal story and how the challenges facing the beef industry affects your operation will be more highly regarded than speaking points alone.

BE INQUIRING. Ask your candidate if they are familiar with your issues. Ask for the candidate's view on the subject and how they will act to address these issues, if elected.

BE COURTEOUS. Be tolerant of differing views and don't speak badly of other politicians or organizations. Keep in mind that there may be other occasions when BFO will lobby this candidate or MP, and a cordial relationship keeps the door open.

BE RESPONSIVE. Try to answer questions. When you can't, offer to get back to the candidate with the information. You can always ask BFO for help in getting the necessary information to the candidate.

BE AVAILABLE. Make sure your candidate knows how to reach you. Feel free to offer to have the BFO office follow up with additional information.

BE AWARE. Local farm organizations often host candidate meetings or debates, which is a good time to get out to see your local candidates and ask them questions all at the same time.

