



December 16, 2022

The Honourable Karina Gould, P.C., MP
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
Karina.Gould@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., MP
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Marie-Claude.Bibeau@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., MP
Minister of Health
Jean-Yves.Duclos@parl.gc.ca

Re: Pan-Canadian School Food Policy

Dear Ministers,

On behalf of the Canadian red meat sector, we applaud the government in moving forward on its pan-Canadian school food policy.

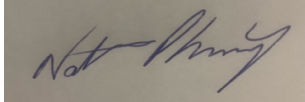
Various stakeholders from our sector participated in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Roundtable on December 6th and heard a wide variety of opinions, as to be expected in such a discussion. While there were anti-meat advocates participating, we also heard from credible nutritionists who agreed that beef and animal protein should be a key pillar in the school food policy, along with other healthy whole foods such as fruits and vegetables. As the government moves beyond the consultation phase, we wanted to ensure the final policy will be based in science, following nutritional guidance.

Animal protein, specifically red meat, should be recognized as a reliable source of bioavailable iron. Canadian dietary guidance recognizes the critical importance of offering iron-rich foods to infants starting at 6 months of age—an important consideration for a school food policy focused on children. Further, red meats are nutrient-dense protein foods that contribute iron, zinc, vitamin B12 and other essential nutrients that many Canadians need more of in their diets. Red meat is part of a healthy, nutritious and balanced diet and should be reflected as such in the policy development.

We also understand that sustainability is an important consideration. We'd emphasize that Canadian agriculture is leading the world in sustainability. The Canadian beef industry takes our responsibility to produce beef sustainably seriously. We have one of the lowest GHG intensities for beef in the world. And we developed an ambitious target to reduce the GHG emission intensity of Canadian beef by 33% by 2030. Our 2030 goals, which include emissions and biodiversity focused targets, put us on track to meet or exceed the Government's absolute target.

Thank you for your consideration. We would be pleased to meet with you to further discuss the school food policy and work with you as it is being developed. We will be following up with your office to set up a meeting.

Sincerely,



Nathan Phinney
President
Canadian Cattle Association



Chris White
President & CEO
Canadian Meat Council



James Bekkering
Chair
National Cattle Feeders Association