



April 18, 2024

The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, P.C. M.P.  
Minister of Transport  
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The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Labour and Seniors  
[MinistrePTLPMinister@labour-travail.gc.ca](mailto:MinistrePTLPMinister@labour-travail.gc.ca)

Dear Ministers,

The National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) and Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) are writing to express our serious concerns regarding potential strike action by CN and CP Rail employees. We call for your immediate attention to the crisis that will unfold if both Class 1 Canadian railways shut down at the same time for an undetermined period. This scenario would be devastating to the welfare of Canada's national cattle industry.

The Canadian cattle industry relies heavily upon the timely delivery of cattle feed. Drought conditions in western Canada have resulted in feed shortages, and subsequently we have seen increased feed imports from the United States by rail. One rail car is estimated to feed approximately 8,000 animals for one day, therefore Alberta alone requires 9 – 10 trains per week. It is estimated that over 1,000 super-B trucks would be needed per week to replace the volume of feed grain currently being brought in by train, which is in no way feasible.

With a significant volume of feed required for Canada's beef industry and limited storage options, producers meticulously plan their feed supplies on a weekly basis, aligning with rail schedules. These animals are on a very specific feeding schedule and the wellbeing of animals is at risk if there are even brief delays in feed delivery by rail and therefore the delivery of feed is, without question, essential.

And as the cost of farm inputs continue to increase, even the threat of a rail strike significantly worsen the situation for producers already struggling to manage multiple economic challenges. Canada's economy cannot continue to function with this ad hoc approach to essential rail services.

We urge the federal government to proactively facilitate a swift resolution to the current labour challenges in order to prevent the pending strike or lockout of CN and CP rail workers. And, to implement a long-term labour strategy that recognizes the essential need for reliable rail service in Canada.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Will Lowe".

Will Lowe  
Chair, NCFA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nathan Phinney".

Nathan Phinney  
President, CCA

c.c. The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, P.C., M.P.  
Members of the Standing Committee of Agriculture  
Members of the Standing Committee of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities