



Submission to the Canadian Industrial Relations Board

Reference File: Matter between CN and TCRC (**Board file no. 037674-C**)
Matter between CPKC and TCRC (**Board file no. 037673-C**)

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From: National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA)
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Background: The NCFA serves as the national voice for cattle feeders across Canada. Together with government, NCFA is committed to the growth and sustainability of cattle production across Canada.

Canada's beef industry contributes \$9.7 billion in farm cash receipts annually, contributes \$21.8 billion to national GDP annually and accounts for 347,000 jobs, each one of which supports another 3.9 jobs elsewhere in the economy.

Response to the CIRB's Information Request:

Details regarding the movement of heavy fuel, propane, food and water treatment materials needed in remote communities and throughout Canada on the rail network of Canadian National Railway Company (CN Rail) and special areas of delivery:

Any rail strike scenario will be devastating to the welfare of Canada's national cattle herd and the individuals who care for them. The Canadian cattle industry relies heavily on timely and reliable delivery of cattle feed to care for the national herd of over 3.5 million animals.

Chronic drought conditions in western Canada continue to result in feed shortages, and subsequently there are increased feed imports from the United States by rail. One rail car is estimated to feed approximately 8,000 animals for only one day. And many feedlot operations, particularly in Alberta, have capacity of over 20,000 cattle. On average, one cow will consume 5400 lbs. of feed while living on a feedlot.

Given the volume of feed required, there are limited storage options, so producers meticulously plan their feed supplies on a weekly basis, aligning with rail schedules. The cattle 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.

Beyond the grave animal welfare concerns, we must acknowledge the mental health of the farm workers who care for these animals and the level of stress that will be created by a feed shortage for millions of cattle.

What alternatives, if any, CN Rail's clients have for delivery of such products:

It is estimated that over 1,000 trucks with super-B grain trailers would be needed per week to replace the volume of cattle feed grain currently being brought in from the U.S. via train, which is in no way feasible due to the chronic labour shortage of truck drivers, the availability of trucks and the cost prohibitions.

In the event that the Board finds that the transportation of certain products is necessary to prevent an immediate and serious danger to the safety or health of the public, what level of services or operations must continue to ensure its appropriate supply.

As noted above, the ability to store the tremendous volume of feed required for Canadian cattle is limited. The reality is that the feed needs to continue to move at its current level of service to ensure animal welfare is maintained.