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Election Platform Priorities

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Introduction

As your caucus prepares for the next federal election, the National Cattle Feeders' Association (NCFA) respectfully recommends the following priorities for inclusion in your election platform. We believe these priorities will not only strengthen the Canadian beef industry -- via increased exports, economic growth and competitiveness -- but also contribute to food affordability and food security.

Platform Priorities

Productivity and Competitiveness

Canadian farmers compete on the world stage and require government to maintain a business environment that cultivates success. Canada's regulatory, policy, and taxation requirements must track alongside those of our international competitors so our farmers can remain globally competitive.

RECOMMENDED PLATFORM COMMITMENTS:

- a) Recognize industry-led initiatives on **climate change** and ensure **government-mandated solutions do not** place Canadian agriculture at a **competitive disadvantage globally** or compromise food security within our borders.
- b) Conduct an **inventory and cost analysis** on the totality of **federal taxation, regulations and policy burdening Canadian farmers** and complete a **comparison to our global competitors**.
- c) **Apply a food affordability and food security lens** to all federal government legislation, regulation and policy to prevent unintended and detrimental impacts on Canadian farmers.
- d) Return **intergenerational farm transfers in Canada to the former one-half capital gains inclusion rate** and conduct a **responsible examination** of the impact of all capital gains changes in Budget 2024 on **Canadian farms, food security and food affordability**.
- e) Complete the legislative process to extend the **carbon tax exemption for on-farm use of natural gas and propane**.
- f) Ensures **Business Risk Management programs** reflect the realities of the agriculture sector today.

Supply Chain and Inputs

Recent years have presented unprecedented challenges to the accessibility and affordability of farm inputs. Inputs include items such as fertilizer, feed, seed, machinery and fuel.

The cost of inputs has skyrocketed. Transportation challenges have made obtaining inputs more difficult due to rail and port labour disputes as well as roads and bridges that are unable to withstand extreme weather. Geopolitics will continue to challenge access to farm inputs and alternative pipelines need to be considered.

RECOMMENDED PLATFORM COMMITMENT:

- a) Build and fund a **Critical Farm Input Strategy** to ensure Canada's farmers can continue to provide affordable and available food for Canada and the world.
- b) Deem **rail service and port service as essential** in spite of labour disputes.

Labour Shortages

Labour shortages continue to be the single largest challenge to the growth of Canadian agriculture, costing the industry \$3.5 billion in lost sales annually. Despite best efforts, the agriculture sector cannot secure enough Canadian labour. This results in a need for foreign workers, yet the system to bring in foreign workers is complicated, backlogged, and fraught with unnecessary complications.

RECOMMENDED PLATFORM COMMITMENT:

- a) **Establish a cross-departmental government task group** that will collaborate directly with the sector to develop and implement **practical solutions** for the chronic **labour shortage** in Canada's **agriculture** sector.
- b) Acknowledge the unique labour needs in Canadian agriculture which if not addressed poses a threat to food affordability and food security.

Trade

Each year, Canada exports up to 50% of the value of all cattle and beef we produce. In 2020, the value of these exports was \$4.8 billion. Up to 75% of those exports go to the U.S. and Mexico. The government must support the sector to harness the tremendous growth potential of existing and new trade relationships.

RECOMMENDED PLATFORM COMMITMENT:

- a) Strongly **defend** the interest of Canada's **export-oriented agriculture** sector in the **2026 CUSMA review** in the context the increasing protectionist approach of the United States.
- b) **Defend the science-based decision-making** foundation of **CPTPP** and do not accept new members who demonstrate non-compliant trade behaviour.
- c) Invest in **animal disease prevention and response plans** to protect Canada's market access around the globe.

Regulatory Barriers

Canadian regulators are increasingly risk adverse while our global competitors, including the United States, are becoming less risk adverse and therefore more competitive. Canadian farms are being left behind – incumbered by inefficient regulatory systems.

- a) Develop and execute an action plan to **address barriers of government approval systems** that **prevent Canadian farmers access to innovative** products and tools that are being used by global competitors for years before we have access. Moved from above section
- b) **Prioritize** the work of the Canada- United States **Regulatory Cooperation Council** to **unburden Canadian farmers** from costly regulatory inefficiencies.
- c) **Transform** and modernize **government agencies and departments** to **better serve Canadian farmers and consumers** through coordinated, engaged and knowledgeable leadership committed to serving as a partner not a barrier to the Canadian agriculture sector.