

December 2, 2024
The Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada, K1A 0A4

Re: Reject the amendments and support Bill C-275, *An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act (biosecurity on farms)*, in its original form

Dear Honourable Senators,

The undersigned agricultural organizations write on behalf of our respective members to express the serious concerns of farmers regarding the amendments proposed at the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry to Bill C-275, *An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act (biosecurity on farms)*, now being debated at Report Stage in the Senate.

The committee's amendments to Bill C-275 diverge significantly from the original intent of the legislation, which sought to provide targeted intervention against the biosecurity impact and risk that individuals who come onto farms without authorization introduce to farming operations. These amendments are not supported by the members of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Canadian Cattle Association, National Cattle Feeders Association, Canadian Pork Council, and Canadian Meat Council.

Rather than addressing these important biosecurity concerns and taking a step forward in strengthening the overall safety of our food system, the proposed amendments risk punishing Canadian farmers, their workers, and invited guests in the event of a biosecurity breach and place additional burdens and mental stress on the very people who feed our communities. More specifically, Bill C-275 as amended fails to recognize that farms have little to no ability to intervene or enforce their protocols when someone unlawfully enters a farming premise.

Canadian producers have long been recognized as leaders in advancing animal welfare and implementing robust on-farm biosecurity measures. Across all livestock and animal agriculture sectors, farmers enforce strict biosecurity protocols to safeguard the health, safety, and comfort of the animals under their care, which apply to farmers, their employees, and all authorized visitors. They closely monitor their animals, adhere to these rigorous biosecurity practices to prevent and limit the spread of devastating diseases and reduce or eliminate food safety hazards. Moreover, on-farm employees and those who come into regular contact with animals receive specific training on these important measures and protocols to ensure consistent and thorough adherence.

Senators, we urge you to reject the committee's amendments and pass Bill C-275 in its original form, which will help uphold the rigorous biosecurity and food safety protocols in place on farms and provide increased safety for our producers, the animals they raise, and the food they produce. By strengthening the system that safeguards food production from the risks

imposed by unauthorized visitors, you are supporting farmers, our agricultural and agri-food sector, and Canadian consumers in a meaningful way.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please don't hesitate to reach out to Brodie Berrigan, Senior Director of Government Relations and Farm Policy (brodie@canadian-farmers.ca).

Sincerely,

Canadian Federation of Agriculture
Canadian Cattle Association
National Cattle Feeders Association
Canadian Pork Council
Canadian Meat Council

