



August 20, 2025

Chad Anderson  
President  
Lambton County Cattlemen's Association

Dear Chad,

*Re: RMP Program Guidelines – Resolution 25-08*

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The following resolution was passed at the Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) Annual General Meeting in February and was recently discussed by the BFO Board of Directors:

**WHEREAS**, the RMP Program became permanent in 2011 with maximum weights for steers 1500 lbs live or 900 lbs dressed and heifers 1400 lbs live and 820 lbs dressed, and  
**WHEREAS**, carcass weights have increased because of many factors such as pandemic, Cargill Strike, Ryding closing and shortage of replacements, and  
**WHEREAS**, now the average carcass weight is over the maximum that the RMP pays, which means over half of the cattle are over RMP maximum, and  
**WHEREAS**, now many dressed steers and heifers are being deemed OTM and are not allowed in the RMP Program but are still graded AAA or Prime but were not OTM when they reached the RMP maximum weight,  
**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT BFO** lobby to have an OTM over the maximum weight allowed in the RMP program if it grades AAA or Prime.

The BFO Board of Directors would like to thank the Lambton County Cattlemen's Association for bringing this resolution forward.

This issue was reviewed and discussed by the BFO Feedlot Committee at a meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025. The committee agreed the weight limits within the program categories under RMP, particularly the feedlot program, could be reviewed and updated to reflect current industry practices. However, the committee did not recommend the OTM prohibition be removed to allow OTM cattle to be covered under the program. The primary justification from the committee was that the RMP program was designed to reflect best management practices and allowing inclusion of OTM cattle would represent a deviation from that principle.

Notwithstanding the feedback received from the BFO Feedlot Committee, this issue was also discussed by members of the RMP Beef Cattle Reference Committee at a meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup>,

2025. The Reference Committee is made up of 11 members, five of whom are current BFO Directors, six of whom are non-board members. Seven of the 11 members are feedlot operators.

While the committee understood the frustration many producers have when OTM cattle are discounted on price and excluded from RMP coverage, despite cattle grading Prime, AAA or AA, they too could not support a recommendation to remove the OTM exclusion as a parameter of the program for the following reasons:

- 1) First and foremost, similar to the views expressed by the BFO Feedlot Committee, allowing coverage for OTM animals would deviate from the initial program principle of reflecting best management practices within the industry.
- 2) Age is only established at slaughter and therefore the age of the cattle during the program coverage period is not relevant or verifiable, e.g. age of cattle in the 900-1,500 pound window.
- 3) How an animal grades is outside the scope of the program.

It was also noted that the Ontario Corn Fed Beef Program does not qualify OTMs for program inclusion.

It should be pointed out that the temporary inclusion of OTMs within the RMP program during the Cargill Guelph labour disruption in 2024 was permitted on a time-limited basis. This was done to ensure producers who had to delay the marketing of their cattle were not penalized through the program, through no fault of their own. BFO advocated strongly for this during that time and was equally supportive of reinstalling the program requirement that all cattle must be under thirty months of age to be covered under RMP.

Although neither the BFO Feedlot Committee or the RMP Beef Cattle Reference Committee could support a recommendation to allow OTMs to be covered under RMP if they grade Prime or AAA, your resolution did spur discussion about the need to increase the weight coverage limits within the program.

As a result, BFO submitted a formal request on June 24<sup>th</sup> to OMAFA to conduct an analysis on the programming requirements, cost of production adjustments, and administrative costs of increasing the weight coverages by 50 pounds within each respective category to better reflect current industry practices. BFO will continue to work with OMAFA on this proposal and will, in consultation with the BFO Feedlot Committee and the RMP Beef Cattle Reference Committee, assess the benefits and costs of proceeding with a potential adjustment to coverage weights.

Sincerely,



Craig McLaughlin  
President

cc: Blair Williamson (Advisory Councillor)  
Hanneke Mills (Secretary)

Tom Wilson (Mover)  
Ralph Eyre (Seconder)