

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Beef Farmers Return to Queen's Park Leading into Ontario's Local Food Week** *Ontario Beef Sector's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Barbecue and Lobby Day*

**May 29, 2025 (Guelph, Ont.)** – The Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) returned to Queen's Park this week to host their highly anticipated annual barbecue and lobby day on the lawn of the Ontario Legislature, and just prior to Ontario's Local Food Week, which takes place the first week of June and celebrates the abundance of food grown by Ontario farmers. The BFO Board of Directors and staff proudly served over 500 attendees an all-Ontario meal featuring Ontario Corn Fed Beef and fresh salads curated with local ingredients.

Beyond hosting the barbecue, BFO Directors and staff personally met with numerous MPPs throughout the day to highlight key priorities of Ontario's beef sector. These discussions focused on how farmers and government leaders can work together to ensure the sector's sustainability through strategic investments and sound policies that safeguard farmers' financial health and create opportunities for agricultural growth.

"Ontario beef farmers are facing a lot of market uncertainty and trade volatility right now, which is being intensified by the increased costs of raising cattle and producing beef," says Craig McLaughlin, BFO President. "This economic climate is especially difficult for young and beginning farmers, who need access to affordable land and competitive financing to get started. That's why programs like Ontario's Risk Management Program (RMP), the Ontario Feeder Cattle Loan Guarantee Program, the Ontario Breeder Co-operative Program, and access to community pastures are so important to the long-term growth of Ontario's beef sector."

Throughout the day, directors and staff thanked all MPPs for their increased investment and commitment to RMP, and pitched the establishment of a government-backed Breeder Loan Guarantee Program, which would build on the 35-year success of the government-backed Ontario Feeder Cattle Loan Guarantee Program. While not a direct financial ask for the province, a government-backed guarantee would result in competitive financing from lenders, help farmers purchase breeding cattle and support the expansion of Ontario's cow herd.

"Here in Ontario, we raise and produce high-quality beef that enables our farmers and processors to sell into 58 markets around the world," explains McLaughlin. "To meet and grow this demand, it starts at home. We need to address the barriers to entry for young farmers and focus on effective solutions that will ensure we have a thriving sector for generations to come."

The request to reduce large animal veterinarian shortages through enhanced incentive programs; to improve meat processor viability by exploring property tax relief measures for abattoirs and new investments in infrastructure and expansion; to align the Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Act with industry approved standards of care; and to make available the opportunity for agricultural expansion through the development of community pastures and Crown Land access in northern Ontario for food production were also discussed throughout the day.

BFO wishes to thank Premier Ford for taking the time to meet with our team, and to Trevor Jones, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness; and MPP Bill Rosenberg and MPP Paul Vickers, Parliamentary Assistants to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, for generously taking time to serve beef to the barbecue attendees. BFO also appreciated the participation of NDP Leader Marit Stiles and MPP John Vanthof, NDP Agriculture Critic, as well as Green Party Leader Mike Schreiner who all helped to serve beef during lunch.

*Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) advocates in the areas of sustainability, animal health and care, environment, food safety, and domestic and export market development. BFO's mission is to provide leadership that fosters a sustainable and profitable beef sector to meet producer needs, and have Ontario beef recognized as an outstanding product by consumers.*

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**For More Information and Photos**

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