

NEWS RELEASE

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BFO Celebrates 25th Anniversary of Ontario Agriculture Week at Queen's Park *Ontario Beef Sector's Annual Barbecue and Lobby Day*

October 5, 2023 (Guelph, Ont.) – Under sunny skies and summer-like temperatures, the Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) celebrated the 25th anniversary of Ontario Agriculture Week by visiting Queen's Park yesterday to entice MPPs and their staff to *Fall in Love with Ontario Beef* during their harvest-themed annual barbecue and lobby day on the lawn of the Ontario Legislature. The BFO Board of Directors and staff proudly served 500 attendees an all-Ontario meal featuring Ontario Corn Fed Beef, supporting sustainable farming practices that meet the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) standards.

In addition to this highly anticipated annual event, BFO Directors and staff personally met with numerous MPPs throughout the day to continue to advocate for increased investment in the Ontario Risk Management Program (RMP), a critical program to help protect the province's food security, and ensure stability for the entire beef sector and for rural and urban communities.

"Beef farmers, along with our partners in the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition, the largest farm coalition in Ontario, continue to unite in our ask to have annual funding for RMP increased to provide our farmers with protection against rising market volatility, economic uncertainty, and inflationary pressures," says Jack Chaffe, BFO President. "The most impactful and efficient way that government can support farmers in Ontario is to increase the province's investment in this critical program."

Directors and staff also encouraged government to help the beef sector remain competitive by prioritizing access to high-value export markets for Ontario beef through strategic market development investments in trade missions, market investigation and adaptation around new customers, training and innovation, marketing materials, as well as tradeshow and seminar participation.

"Here in Ontario, we raise and produce high-quality beef that enables our farmers and processors to sell into key markets around the world," explains Chaffe. "This is extremely important for the sustainability of our sector as approximately 40 per cent of the value of each beef animal is the result of export markets and trade."

The request to align the Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Act with industry approved standards of care; the need for continued investment in meat processing capacity, recruitment and training; and 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 Minister Jones, Deputy Premier, Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and MPP Trevor Jones, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, for generously taking time to serve beef to the barbecue attendees. BFO also appreciated the participation of NDP Leader Marit Stiles, NDP Deputy Leader Sol Mamakwa 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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