

BFO STATEMENT

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



BFO's Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

January 7, 2021 (Guelph, Ont.) – Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) joins with those in our community who are calling for an end to systemic racism, as well as discrimination and prejudice based on sexual orientation, gender, religion, and ability (visible and invisible), and linguistic discrimination. BFO is committed to advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion within the beef industry and the broader agri-food sector, and fighting racism and discrimination in all of its forms.

“We recognize the beef sector is not always a diverse industry, particularly at the farmer and association level,” says BFO President Rob Lipsett. “Further along our supply chain, however, there is a great amount of diversity among the people dedicated to ensuring our product makes it to the tables of consumers. Likewise, our consumers are another integral and incredibly diverse group from all walks of life. We feel it is important to be a voice, build bridges, listen, learn, and support all members of our community.”

Recognizing the need to develop from within, BFO's statement of values focuses on advocacy and education within the organization, its activities, and among the membership. It includes a number of ways in which we are committed to development, including but not limited to listening and learning, speaking up against prejudice and discriminatory language, behaviour and actions, increased understanding of how policies and programs related to agriculture affect Indigenous communities, a commitment to working collaboratively with others more knowledgeable than us on fighting discrimination, and a commitment to evolving as we learn.

“This statement of values took us time to build and to ensure we got it right,” continues Lipsett. “Part of this process was recognizing and acknowledging this commitment is not a one-time thing – it's a starting point for what needs to be a continually evolving conversation and effort, and ultimately a culture shift within the industry. These are more than just words on a page, they represent alignment and a commitment to future action at our highest level.”

BFO's full statement of values on diversity, equity and inclusion can be found on the BFO website. This page will be updated and built upon as we learn, evolve, and put our words into action.

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For more information

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