



Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

(transmitted via email)

June 15, 2022

Ministers Duclos, Bibeau,

We write to express our opposition to Health Canada's decision to move forward with front-of-package labelling that unfairly targets the beef and pork industry.

We write collectively, on behalf of the prairie Official Opposition parties, to request that the federal government include an exemption to front-of-package labelling for ground beef and pork products, as every other jurisdiction internationally has done.

Canadians across the prairie provinces are mindful that the current exemptions for front-of-package labeling are not grounded in common standards. Exemptions, for example, have been given to the dairy industry.

More importantly, as Professor Sylvain Charlebois from Dalhousie University has noted, most Canadians cook their ground beef and pork. It appears that Health Canada's decision to apply warning labels to ground beef and pork is predicated on these products being consumed in their raw form. Any thoughtful and productive front-of-package labelling strategy must consider how Canadians truly consume products.

While we support the policy objective of improving Canadians' access to nutritional information through front-of-package labelling, we are deeply concerned that these objectives are not met thoughtfully by your government.

We have heard from our prairie constituents and from stakeholders. We are of the unanimous view that your government should press pause, and institute an exemption for ground beef and pork products from your front-of-package labelling regulation. It is clear that your government needs to undertake additional consultations.

As Canadians face higher inflationary pressures, particularly with the cost of groceries, now is not the time to unfairly target the beef and pork industries. Canadians should not be incorrectly informed by their government that ground beef and pork, a reliable and cost effective source of protein, is unhealthy.

The decision to compel front-of-package labelling for ground beef and pork is not final. You have the power to listen, and change direction.

We urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to reconsider.

We are willing, at your convenience, to discuss this matter further.

Respectfully,



Heather Sweet
MLA, Edmonton Manning
Official Opposition Critic for Agriculture, Alberta



Trent Wotherspoon
MLA, Regina Rosemont
Official Opposition Critic for Agriculture, Saskatchewan



Diljeet Brar
MLA, Burrows
Official Opposition Critic for Agriculture, Manitoba