



January 5, 2024

Honourable Nathan Neudorf
Minister of Affordability and Utilities
Government of Alberta

Re: Renewable Energy and The Beef Industry

Dear Minister Neudorf,

We are writing to you on behalf of Alberta's 18,000 beef producers to highlight our concerns and perspective for the future of renewable energy in the province.

Beef farmers and ranchers are at the forefront to climate change solutions. In Alberta, beef producers stewarding over 28 million acres of grassland, preventing the release of several hundred million tonnes of stored carbon, and allowing wildlife – including many endangered species – to survive and thrive.

Beef producers are innovative. Throughout the supply chain producers upcycle millions of tonnes of unusable by-products to produce high quality protein, such as low-quality grain and low-quality forage. And now some producers are even branching out into renewable energy with the use of biogas generators.

With that in mind agricultural land, and therefore our supply chain is at risk. The number of acres of grasslands conserved is directly related to the number of grazing cows.

For solar, wind, geothermal and nuclear, there is a need for clear regulation to protect beef producers and agricultural communities. We ask the government to work with the renewable energy sector, in consultation with stakeholders on the landscape, to develop:

- 1) A fund, similar in intent to the orphan well fund, to ensure the protection of landowners.
Landowners are at grave risk if a renewable company goes bankrupt or the contract term ends. In some cases that could leave the landowner burdened with the reclamation of renewable infrastructure. Although this can currently be outlined in the contract terms, this does not provide guaranteed protection.
- 2) Clear and transparent processes for contractual procedure and conflict resolution measures.

To our understanding, dispute resolution with renewable companies does not go through a legislated body, leaving the landowner with the court system. This puts the landowner at a huge disadvantage compared to the energy company since a court case would be a relatively major cost to the landowner. This represents an impediment to holding these companies to account.

- 3) A process for landowners to be compensated when diminution of property rights or property value has occurred.
- 4) Government policy that prioritizes renewable initiatives that do not convert agricultural land out of production or undermine the ecosystem stewardship of beef producers in conserving rangelands.
- 5) Government policy that prioritizes projects that do not deprive producers and communities of their ownership, use, economic value, or enjoyment of their property or any right attached to property.

Although ag land may be cheaper than urban land, it does have a value of increasing importance. Property rights and the sustainability of agricultural land is important to all Albertans and needs to be protected. Together, we need to ensure renewable integrations do not put producers, and the over \$5 billion the beef industry contributes into the provincial GDP, at risk.

Please support the beef industry and the hard work they do for stewardship, upcycling and agricultural innovation. Thank you for your time and we look forward to working with you more in the future.

Sincerely,



Brodie Haugan
Chair, Alberta Beef Producers



Graham Overguard
President, Western Stock Growers' Association