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## NEWS RELEASE COMMUNIQUÉ

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Ministry of Agriculture  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

### **Governments assessing impact of wildfires on B.C.'s agriculture sector**

VICTORIA – The governments of Canada and British Columbia are working under the AgriRecovery disaster framework to determine the type of assistance that may be required by British Columbia's agriculture sector to recover from the impact of wildfires.

The announcement was made today following the first meeting between Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lawrence MacAulay and B.C. Agriculture Minister Lana Popham.

Government officials are working together to quickly assess the extraordinary costs farmers are incurring and what additional assistance may be required to recover and return to production following the wildfires. The types of costs under consideration include:

- Costs related to ensuring animal health and safety;
- Feed, shelter and transportation costs;
- Costs to re-establish perennial crop and pasture production damaged by fire.

A federal-provincial-territorial cost-shared suite of Business Risk Management (BRM) programs is available to help farmers in managing disaster events, including wildfires. These include AgriStability, AgriInvest and AgriInsurance. AgriRecovery is a federal-provincial-territorial disaster relief framework intended to work together with the core BRM programs to help agricultural producers recover from natural disasters.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Lawrence MacAulay, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food –**

"Our Government stands with producers in British Columbia who are facing challenges and hardships because of these wildfires. Together, with our provincial counterparts, we will work closely with affected producers to assess the full scope of their needs and help them get back in business as quickly as possible."

#### **Lana Popham, B.C. Minister of Agriculture –**

"The AgriRecovery response will help B.C. ranchers and farmers recover from their losses, and return to their land and their livelihoods. Our governments are working with producers, local officials and stakeholders, and the results and spirit of resilience is collective and clear. We will work together to respond to this emergency until the job is done."

#### **Kevin Boon, general manager, BC Cattlemen's Association –**

"B.C. ranchers are happy to hear that the two governments are doing the necessary

assessments that will be needed to give them a fighting chance to get back into business. These fires have caused unprecedented impacts for not only the cattle industry but for all of the rural communities. We urge the governments to do everything possible in their assessment, including looking at the parameters of the program, to get as much financial support as possible into these businesses.

“While the funds may go towards ranchers rebuilding the infrastructure and supplying feed for their animals, every dollar will be spent in the communities where they live. Those funds will be every bit as important to rebuilding the communities as they are to rebuilding the ranches and helping the B.C. cattle industry to survive.”

**Learn More:**

Summary of other wildfire response programs supporting B.C. ranchers and farmers (B.C. link): <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2017AGRI0046-001405>

Business Risk Management programs for B.C. farmers: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/insurance-and-income-protection>

AgriRecovery: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/?id=1387480598562>

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