



COUNTY OF  
**Northern Lights**

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Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Honorable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
229 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

July 25, 2023

Honourable Ministers: Re: State of Agriculture Disaster

This letter brings attention that the County of Northern Lights has declared an Agriculture Disaster following the motion, 297/25/07/23, made the 25<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023.

Our area has seen dry conditions starting the fall of 2022 and continuing into 2023, lack of rainfall, high temperature and wind have exacerbated the drought conditions. These drought conditions have brought numerous fires to the Peace Region causing unprecedented smoke for nearly two months harming the health of various species and ecosystems. Yields will be well below average in parts of the County, feed will be difficult and expensive to source due to the widespread drought across Western Canada and parts of the United States. Feed alternatives will also be costly and extremely hard to source due to record high grain prices and over-contracting.

At this time, the County of Northern Lights would request to be added as a prescribed region for the 2023 Livestock Tax Deferral. We also would encourage an assessment under AgriRecovery to address the increased cost that will be incurred sourcing feed and the increased burden the smoke has placed on livestock. The widespread fires in the Peace Region have brought increased losses from respiratory issues and predation forcing predators to migrate closer to livestock. It is important to note with recent inflation, livestock producers' costs have increased greatly the last two years and livestock prices nearly 2 years later are starting to finally move higher. This has resulted in a situation where many livestock producers are facing financial hardships. Whereas AFSC has a suite of programs to help mitigate drought for crop producers, the same tools aren't as effective at mitigating these kinds of losses to livestock or mixed farms. Therefore, we believe an AgriRecovery payout could address some of these shortfalls and extra losses.

We appreciate the effort put forth so far and look forward to updates on further programming.

Sincerely,

Terry Ungarian  
Reeve, County of Northern Lights

Cc: Danielle Smith, Premier, Chris Warkentin, MP Peace River, Dan Williams, MLA for Peace River, Lance Oulette, NPARA (via email), Karen Rosvold, Director—District 4 RMA (via email), Laura Poile, Secretary AAAF (via email), ASB's of the Peace Region (via email)