



Robert Bonofiglio  
Senior Manager, Animal Welfare Services  
Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General

November 15, 2021

Re: Enforcement of the PAWS Act in Algoma

The Algoma Federation of Agriculture (AFA) represents the general interests and needs of farmers in the Algoma area. The AFA recently attended a session on the Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, where farmers in the area received some information and shared some issues and concerns regarding the PAWS Act and its enforcement in the area.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture worked with other commodity groups and the provincial government to develop this new model, designed to protect animals from abuse and neglect create uniformity across the province. As farmers, the AFA generally supports this legislation as we care about the health, safety, welfare, and comfort of our animals.

However, the powers prescribed under the PAWS Act are broad and the Inspector's authority to enforce the Act can have wide ranging implications for a farmer. A level of implicit trust that an Animal Welfare Inspector is qualified and competent with respect to livestock welfare is required so that the farming community is assured that judgements and decisions are based on science rather than assumptions. Based on the concerns and context presented at the information session, the AFA has put together several questions below:

*What specific training/education do animal welfare inspectors complete, specific to the welfare of livestock? How well do they understand the Animal Care Codes of Practice? What training/understanding do inspectors have of on-farm biosecurity measures?*

*How do animal welfare inspectors interact and engage with the local veterinarian? How does the judgement of a veterinarian apply to the decision of an Inspector? As it is up to the discretion of the inspector to engage with veterinarians, livestock stakeholders, etc. how can we ensure consistency across Inspectors? How can we encourage local Inspectors to work more closely with local stakeholders and vets?*

*What facilities do the inspectors have to properly house and quarantine livestock during the appeal period? What biosecurity measures are taken while animals are in the possession of the inspector?*

*What transparency/accountability exists within the complaint process once a complaint has been made against an inspector? What is the specific Code of Conduct that inspectors must abide by?*

The AFA is not referencing any specific instance or representing any individual farmers. Rather, we are trying to provide information to the farming community at-large to improve the understanding of the PAWS Act and ensure the enforcement of the Act in the area is consistent and based on appropriate metrics. Attached with this letter is a general summary of the meeting itself.



We appreciate a response to the questions at your earliest convenience. If you need any further information, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Koivisto". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "K".

Jason Koivisto, Chair, Algoma Federation of Agriculture

[jasonkoivisto@gmail.com](mailto:jasonkoivisto@gmail.com)