

June 2, 2022

Dr. Lorie Gold, President
College of Veterinarians of Ontario
2106 Gordon Street
Guelph, ON N1L 1G6

Sent via email: president@cvo.org

Dear Dr. Gold:

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is the largest general farm organization in Ontario proudly representing more than 38,000 farm family members across the province. OFA has a strong voice for our members and the agri-food industry on issues, legislation and regulations governed by all levels of government. We are passionate and dedicated to ensuring the agri-food sector and our rural communities are included, consulted, and considered in any new and changing legislation that impacts the sustainability and growth of our farm businesses.

Animals and animal-related agriculture are crucial to the economic stability of Ontario's rural communities. Healthy livestock means productive livestock, and in turn contributes to food production, income and job generation, and economic development and growth. I believe that both farmers and veterinarians share this view.

We understand that veterinarians play a critical role in protecting the health of animals and people, promoting animal welfare, and maintaining a healthy and safe food supply. Due to the sensitive nature of the profession, being a veterinarian carries with it risks related to professional liability (malpractice). Professional negligence can cause serious repercussions and financial implications for the veterinarian, veterinary practice, and the client (farmer). The loss of use or death of livestock can be detrimental to livestock farmers and their businesses, and litigation for malpractice can cause significant financial burdens for the producer and veterinarian alike.

Liability coverage protects against claims in the event of an error or negligent act performed by the veterinary professional. OFA understands that, while highly recommended, professional liability insurance for veterinarians in Ontario is not required. These policies work to protect the business, including the veterinarian, and the clients from the potential ramifications in the event of an act of malpractice.

OFA acknowledges the shortage of veterinarians in many parts of Ontario. Lack of professional liability coverage could lead to increased operational costs and eventually, act as a barrier to the sustainability of the veterinary practice in the instance of malpractice events.

As a farm organization, OFA has a vested interest in the long-term establishment and success of veterinarians in our rural communities, working with our livestock farmers. We encourage the College of Veterinarians of Ontario to make professional liability insurance mandatory for livestock veterinarians, to ensure no serious implications are borne by the veterinarian, the veterinary practice, and the client in the event of professional negligence.

Please let me know how OFA might support your efforts on this topic.

Sincerely,



Peggy Brekveld
President

cc: Jan Robinson, Registrar, and Chief Executive Officer, College of Veterinarians of Ontario
Dr. Katherine Mullin, President, Ontario Veterinary Medical Association
OFA Board of Directors