

June 14, 2022

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

hcmister.ministresc@hc-sc.gc.ca

Dear Minister Duclos:

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, I am writing to express our concerns with the recent announcement by Health Canada to impose front-of-package labelling on ground meats, including beef and pork.

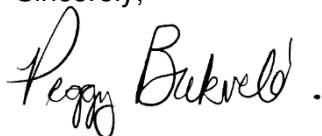
We are concerned this regulation comes at a time when inflation and food prices are at an all-time high and food security is a global priority. Ground meat is a staple in Canadian households because it is an affordable, nutrient-dense protein that offers Canadians essential nutrients. Putting a warning label on ground meat will create negative nutritional and economic impacts for consumers. Ground meat is an especially important single ingredient whole-food for vulnerable populations as it is affordable, safe, and offers an abundance of nutrients.

Ground beef and pork contribute iron, zinc, vitamin B12 and other essential nutrients that many Canadians need more of in their diets. Reductions in ground meat consumption will make a nominal impact, at best, on Canadians' overall intake of saturated fat while at the same time putting vulnerable populations at risk of increasingly inadequate iron intakes.

Further, this proposal makes Canada the only jurisdiction in the world placing a health warning label on ground meat — other countries which have implemented front-of-package labelling requirements exempt all single ingredient whole foods. We strongly encourage Canada to take the same approach.

The last thing we need is another shock to the agri-food supply chain. As Ontarians and Canadians rebound from a pandemic and navigate legitimate fears regarding immediate and long-term food security I urge you to reconsider this needless regulatory burden that will negatively impacting consumer confidence in locally grown food.

Sincerely,



Peggy Brekveld
President



cc: Dr. Stephen Lucas, Deputy Minister of Health Canada
Honourable Marie Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada
Honourable Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
Mary Robinson, President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture
OFA Board of Directors
Jack Chaffe, President, Beef Farmers of Ontario
John de Bruyn, Chair, Ontario Pork