

Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Office of the Minister

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Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
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June 30, 2022

Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
aafc.minister-ministre.aac@agr.gc.ca

Dear Minister Bibeau:

I am writing to you to request that the federal government initiate the steps required to complete an AgriRecovery assessment for the poultry sector (chicken, turkey, and duck) for losses related to this year's Avian Influenza (AI) outbreak.

As you are aware, the poultry sector experienced significant uncertainty when 26 cases of AI were detected in Ontario during the spring wild bird migration. For instance, the duck sector had been acutely affected due to the nature of the disease spread as well as the way in which AI infection had to be handled. OMAFRA, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Feather Board Command Centre worked directly with impacted farmers and processors. Thanks to our joint efforts, we helped farmers preserve flocks and protect animal welfare.

Poultry farmers and owners were encouraged to follow strong biosecurity measures to contain and prevent the spread of AI which included a Minister's Order limiting the movement to and participation of birds in events where they commingle, such as shows, sales, swaps, fairs, sport and educational displays. This order was in effect from April 9, 2022, to May 20, 2022.

Additionally, as of May 17, 2022, 35 countries have imposed import suspensions on Canadian poultry products. In 2021, Ontario exported \$281.0 million of poultry and eggs. With the restrictions ongoing, the sector will face large financial shortfalls.

My staff have conducted a preliminary AgriRecovery assessment and have concluded that the criteria were met and that a response may be warranted. I am asking you, on behalf of the Ontario poultry sector, to direct officials to undertake a formal AgriRecovery assessment of this incident.

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I appreciate your attention to this matter. I am happy we can continue working together to support our sector. I look forward to meeting with you and our colleagues in Saskatoon at the FPT Annual Conference later in July to discuss these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lisa M. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" and last name "Thompson" clearly distinguishable.

Lisa M. Thompson
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs