



# Memo

To: All Members of the BC Cattlemen's Association  
From: Kevin Boon, General Manager  
Date: August 6, 2021  
Re: BC SPCA - Unannounced Farm/Ranch Inspections

## ATTENTION ALL LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS:

We would like every member to be aware of this matter as it could potentially impact you. **We have recently been notified of the BC SPCA's intention to begin unannounced inspections of farms and ranches.**

While details are still vague, BCCA wants to share what we know as of today:

- **Authority:** The BC SPCA has the authority to conduct proactive inspections under Section 15.1 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*. This does not require a warrant.
- **Scope:** SPCA plans to conduct inspections on two farms for each livestock commodity this year.
- **Timeline:** Inspections may begin immediately in some areas.
- **Unannounced:** These inspections will be conducted without prior notice to producers.
- **Inspection participants:** The BC SPCA will bring their inspector and a veterinarian. A staff person from Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) will participate as an observer.
- **Inspection results:** Producer information and inspection results are protected under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Inspection results will be private between the BC SPCA and the individual producer.
- **Biosecurity:** Plans and protocols that are in place will be adhered to by the BC SPCA investigators.
- **Animals in Distress:** The BC SPCA will be assessing for distress during the inspections. If an animal is found to be in distress, BC SPCA will bring it to the attention of the producer and provide the producer with an opportunity to make changes that will relieve the distress. The BC SPCA has the authority under the Act to request animal care records. Producers who are caring for sick or injured animals will want to be in contact with their veterinarian and/or have a plan for their care.
- **Accepted Industry Practices:** The Code of Practice and any verification programs will be used by the BC SPCA as a guide for compliance. BC SPCA will be looking to see that proper due diligence is in place so that an animal is not at risk of becoming distressed. **A summary of the required practices under the Code of Practice for the Care & Handling of Beef Cattle is enclosed.**

I want to reassure our members that BCCA is working to address this issue. Since being notified by the BC SPCA we have contacted government to raise our concerns. We have also been collaborating with the other livestock industries to meet with government and the BC SPCA to clarify the authority, the rationale and the process for inspections.

We will continue to share more information as it becomes available. If you have questions or concerns, please our office 1-877-688-2333.

Regards,  
Kevin Boon,  
BCCA General Manager

Attached:

- Notice to Livestock Producers
- Summary of Code requirements



August 6, 2021

## ATTENTION ALL LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

BC Cattlemen's Association wants to inform our members of an issue that has come to our attention that may impact you.

We have been notified of the BC SPCA's intention to begin "unannounced proactive inspections" of farms and ranches.

### WHAT IS HAPPENING?

The BC SPCA has notified livestock organizations that they intend to conduct proactive, unannounced inspections on farms/ranches this summer. The BC SPCA has the authority to conduct proactive inspections under Section 15.1 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*.

### WHAT IS BCCA DOING?

- **Voiced Strong Opposition.** BCCA stated our strong opposition with the ministry and inquired about whether SPCA had such authority.
- **Seeking Clarification.** BCCA is asking the ministry of agriculture to clarify whether enshrining the Codes of Practice into regulation has altered the process SPCA's ability to conduct inspections.
- **Protecting personal rights.** BCCA is working with other livestock associations on this matter. We are reviewing legal opinions obtained by other livestock associations to ensure that we are protecting your rights and fully understand the scope of the SPCA's authority.
- **Joining Forces.** BCCA has been working with the BC Agriculture Council and the other livestock associations to understand the details of this initiative. We are working to gather more information and will provide you with accurate information as soon as possible so that you are prepared in case a visit takes place.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- **Witness.** If the SPCA comes to conduct an inspection, we recommend that you have someone, such as a veterinarian, who can participate in the inspection as a witness. The Ministry of Agriculture has agreed to provide a member of their staff to participate as an observer in the SPCA's inspections. If an SPCA inspector makes a proactive visit to your ranch, please notify the BCCA office.
- **Biosecurity.** The SPCA inspectors have agreed to follow your biosecurity plan and protocol. We recommend that signage be posted indicating all visitors must report to the office and follow biosecurity prevention measures.
- **Confidentiality.** Producers should ask for a copy of inspection results (which are confidential between the SPCA and the producer).
- **Follow the Code of Practice.** All producers are asked to familiarize themselves with the *Code of Practice for the Care & Handling of Beef Cattle*. This is the accepted standard of recommended and required industry practices. A summary of the "required" practices from the Code is enclosed.
- **Develop a biosecurity and animal welfare plan.** The Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) Program assists producers with templates and guidance on building plans for biosecurity, animal care and environmental stewardship for your operation. Contact: Bree Patterson, VBP+ Coordinator  
Ph: 1-877-688-2333 Email: VBP@cattlemen.bc.ca.