

Canadian cattle sector shows leadership at climate focused COP27 by unveiling actions to meet ambitious goals

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Calgary, AB – As COP27 wraps up, the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) is pleased to see livestock management systems recognized for many environmental benefits and its role in helping achieve long-term climate objectives. CCA's Bob Lowe and Mitchell Zoratti participated in COP27 as official observers and as part of Canada's official delegation and were on the ground to participate in the many discussions.

"Beef producers experience climate-related events firsthand and we work every day to continuously improve our working landscapes for generations to come," says Bob Lowe, CCA Past President. "As climate policy decisions are made, it is extremely valuable for producers to be present in the discussions and we were pleased to participate on behalf of Canadian beef cattle producers."

COP27 has been coined "the COP for implementation". By and large, discussions have had a strong focus on Climate Finance and on Loss and Damage. However, this year, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) also placed a key focus and emphasis on agriculture and food systems.

COP27 emphasized the need to look at context-specific food production systems noting in their unedited decision document titled **Joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security** that "high potential for adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and mitigation relate to land and food systems, such as conserving and restoring ecosystems, improving sustainability of agricultural practices and reducing food loss and waste from sustainable food systems, and have significant positive direct and indirect links with biodiversity and ecosystem services." The document goes on to recognize "that livestock management systems are very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and that sustainably managed livestock systems have high adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change while playing broad roles in safeguarding food and nutrition security, livelihoods, sustainability, nutrient cycling and carbon management." Further, our sector's targets are aligned with COP27's climate objectives noted in the document to reduce GHG emissions while enhancing sink on pasture and grazing land.

CCA is confident that the Canadian cattle sector is already checking these boxes and through the Canadian Beef Advisors' 2030 goals, we are on track to reach further ambitious targets on emissions intensity reduction, maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce food loss and waste, and more.

"By focusing on intensity, we're improving efficiency, regardless of how many cattle we raise or how much we produce," explains Lowe. "As an industry, we are addressing the food security crisis by feeding the world's hunger for beef with the most sustainable option."

Emissions reduction was central to discussions at COP27. In September 2020, the Canadian Beef Advisors, comprised of the entire Canadian beef cattle value chain, unveiled an ambitious suite of 2030 goals for the industry. Canada already has one of the lowest GHG intensities for beef in the world and our 2030 goals that include a primary production GHG emission intensity reduction by 33 per cent, put us on track to meet or exceed the Government of Canada's absolute target while allowing us to scale up to meet global food security demand.

Quick facts about emission intensity reduction:

- The Canadian Beef Advisors established working groups to develop action plans and identify key milestones to achieve the 2030 goals.
- Specifically on emissions intensity reduction, we expect to see incremental improvements in productivity.
 - By taking a business-as-usual approach, we could see a 17 per cent reduction by 2030. To reach our 2030 target of 33 per cent, the industry needs major breakthroughs from innovative technology and in encouraging adoption amongst cattle producers.
 - Estimates on innovative feed additives that reduce methane, indicate a reduction in emissions by 8-11 per cent with adoption in backgrounding and finishing lots, representing one-third of our goal. The timely approval of new technologies, a streamlined regulatory pathway, and reliable access to the supply of these new products, are critical to the sector's ability to reach these ambitious goals.

To learn more, visit www.sustainable.cattle.ca.

For further information, contact:
Michelle McMullen
Communications Manager
Canadian Cattle Association
403-451-0931 | mcmullenm@cattle.ca