

CP Railway Work Stoppage Will Have Devastating Impacts for Canadian Fertilizer Supply Chain During Crucial Seeding Season

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA, ON, March 17, 2022 — Fertilizer Canada is calling on Canadian Pacific Railway (CP Rail) and Teamster’s Canada Rail Conference (TCRC) to commit to binding arbitration to mitigate impacts on the fertilizer supply chain from a rail work stoppage. A disruption to rail service will once again cripple Canada’s fragile supply chain and have devastating effects in the broader North American economy.

CP Rail has issued a 72-hour notice that they will lock-out more than 3,000 TCRC union members who work as engineers, conductors, trainpersons, and yardpersons. TCRC has also issued a 72-hour notice of a strike. This will be particularly devastating for the agricultural sector, as spring is a crucial season for seeding and farmers are counting on timely supply of fertilizer to maximize their crop yields.

We are asking the federal government to do everything in their power to encourage both parties to enter into binding arbitration, and if necessary, be prepared to enact legislation to swiftly put an end to the work stoppage.

A work stoppage compromises Canada’s position as a leading global fertilizer supplier and could result in fertilizer production facilities being forced to shut-in production, impacting Canadian workers, the economy, and food security. Our members, which include manufacturers of essential nitrogen and potash fertilizers, are already beginning to feel the impacts as preparation for a work stoppage begins.

“Fertilizer is the most important input for crops and is responsible for half of the world’s current food production,” says Karen Proud, President and CEO of Fertilizer Canada. “While we respect the collective bargaining process, Canada cannot afford another disruption to our supply chain. With 75 per cent of all fertilizer in Canada moved by rail, our members are critically dependent on rail service to move products across the country and into international markets.”

There is no other alternative transportation method that currently has capacity or can be brought online in time to mitigate the impact of the work stoppage.

Food security, domestically and internationally, relies on the Canadian fertilizer industry. The agricultural sector is already experiencing supply challenges compounded by the war in Ukraine and cannot withstand anymore disruption. The 2021 growing season saw lower crop yields due to weather conditions. Food security in Canada and internationally depends on maximizing crops this season and fertilizer is critical to this.

ABOUT FERTILIZER CANADA:

Fertilizer Canada represents manufacturers, wholesale and retail distributors of nitrogen, phosphate, potash and sulphur fertilizers. The fertilizer industry plays an essential role in Canada's economy and is committed to supporting the industry through innovation, sustainability, stewardship, safety and security. As the foundation of Canada's agri-food sector, we apply innovative solutions that positively impact the environment, the economy, and the social fabrics of Canadian life.

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