



**FERTILIZER CANADA**

**FERTILISANTS CANADA**

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June 30, 2023

The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Labour  
750-360 Laurier Avenue West  
Narano Building  
Ottawa, ON  
K1P 1C8

Re: ILWU-BCMEA Labour Strike – West Coast Ports

Dear Minister,

Fertilizer Canada is very concerned with the development of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) informing the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA) of their intention to strike on July 1, 2023, impacting over 7,000 longshore workers at West Coast Ports. Fertilizer Canada fully supports the rights of workers to engage in lawful collective bargaining activities, however our industry also has significant concerns about the impact on potash exports and how that could jeopardize food security if a strike does occur.

Canada's fertilizer industry contributes approximately \$24 billion annually to Canada's economic activity, supporting the employment of over 76,000 individuals throughout the supply chain. Fertilizer is responsible for half of global food production and Canada is a major contributor to the global supply of fertilizer products. Canada is the largest producer and exporter of potash in the world and accounts for approximately 12 per cent of all fertilizers produced around the world. Canadian potash is made with an average of 50 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than potash produced in Russia and Belarus (the second and third largest producers in the world), and 95 per cent of the potash we produce is exported to global markets with the majority flowing through the Port of Vancouver. Over 75 countries rely on Canadian fertilizer exports. Potash is second only to gold in export value, contributing about \$5.52 billion to GDP annually. Timely access to fertilizer products is essential in supporting Canadian and global food security and in maintaining Canada's reputation as a reliable exporter to our trading partners.

In recent years strikes (such as the 2021 strike by the Port of Montreal's longshoremen union), blockades, and embargos have caused significant disruption to Canadian and global supply chains. It is vital the labour negotiations are resolved as soon as possible to prevent weeks of disruptions on trade coming in and out of Canada's West Coast. Further, geopolitical events, like the war in Ukraine, have put pressure on global potash supply chains.

Our industry is increasingly concerned about the challenges associated with an unreliable supply chain that unfortunately is a reoccurring event. As referenced in the National Supply



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Chain Task Force recommendations, the Minister of Labour should urgently convene a council of experts to develop a new collaborative labour relations paradigm that would reduce the likelihood of strikes, threat of strikes, or lockouts that risk the operation or fluidity of the national transportation supply chain. Our industry strongly supports this recommendation.

The federal government must support the expeditious resolution of this strike to protect Canada's imports and exports that contribute significantly to global food security as well as our reputation on the world stage as a reliable trading partner.

We encourage you to take the necessary steps to avoid a strike and to be prepared to act immediately in the event a strike does occur. We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to further discuss this important issue. Thank you very much for your attention and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Karen Proud  
President & CEO  
Fertilizer Canada

CC:

The Honourable Omar Alghabra, P.C., M.P., Minister of Transport  
The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P., Minister of Natural Resources  
The Honourable David Eby, M.L.A., Premier of British Columbia  
The Honourable Danielle Smith, M.L.A., Premier of Alberta  
The Honourable Scott Moe, M.L.A., Premier of Saskatchewan  
The Honourable Heather Stefanson, M.L.A., Premier of Manitoba