

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

FOUNDING HEAD OFFICE
209 - 345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1H1
Tel: 250-828-9746
Fax: 250-828-0319



VANCOUVER OFFICE
401 - 312 Main Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6A 2T2
Tel: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726
1-800-793-9701
Email: ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
Web: www.ubcic.bc.ca

UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS

CHIEFS COUNCIL

JUNE 7TH – 8TH, 2023

MUSQUEAM COMMUNITY CENTRE, X^WMƏƏK^WƏYƏM (MUSQUEAM TERRITORY)

Resolution no. 2023-19

RE: Call to Strengthen Animal Farming Practices and Address the Significant Environmental Impacts of Factory Farming

WHEREAS it is our spiritual and ethical responsibility to treat our animal relations with respect, reciprocity, and dignity. We walked beside our animal relatives with an understanding that we needed each other to survive. Animals sustained our people, providing food, medicine, tools, clothing, shelter, warmth, culture, knowledge and identity. When animals sustained us, we treated their sacred bodies with respect. Nothing was wasted and we understood our responsibilities to protect the land, water and air for future generations, including our animal relatives;

WHEREAS the UBCIC Chiefs Council supports an ethical and cruelty-free stance towards animals and recognizes First Nations' rights to co-exist with animals as we have always done, grateful for the ways animals have sustained us since time immemorial through hunting, fishing, trapping, harvesting and wildlife management that is guided by principles of stewardship, sustainability, and accountability, as affirmed by Resolution 2021-05 and Resolution 2021-62;

WHEREAS the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (the UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of BC, passed legislation committing to implement, affirms that Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making matters which would affect their rights choosing their own representatives, maintain and develop their own decision-making institutions, determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories or other resources, they have the rights to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals (**Articles 18, 24 and 32**). States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with Indigenous peoples through their own representative institutions in order to obtain free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them (**Article 19**);

WHEREAS poor treatment of animals in factory farming practices contravenes the customs, laws, traditions and values of First Nations in BC who maintain deep spiritual connections to all living things, including new animal kin that were brought over by colonization and European settlement. Legislation related to factory farming and the treatment of animals is non-existent, and the regulations in place derive from National Farm Animal Care Council, which severely lacks oversight, transparency and accountability and is not aligned with the UN Declaration, nor is it properly regulated with animal care management programs;

WHEREAS the environmental impact of factory farming, which is a system of farming where a lot of animals are kept in a small closed area in order to produce a large amount of meat, eggs, or milk as cheaply as possible, has significantly contributed to [climate change](#). Factory farming produces greenhouse gases throughout the 'supply chain'. For example, forest clearance to grow the crops and rear the animals reduces vital carbon 'sinks' and releases gases previously stored in the soil and vegetation, and gases including methane and nitrous oxide, also produced in significant quantities, are released through various sources including animal waste and fertiliser use in large quantities. Factory farming leads to habitat disturbance, biodiversity loss, predation, and other human activities that have resulted in the [displacement](#) of Indigenous peoples and our animal kin to make room for mass and over-producing factory farms that primarily produce meat and dairy products, thereby creating further welfare, ecosystem and biodiversity loss;

WHEREAS the rampant wildfires throughout Alberta, Saskatchewan and BC are indicative of climate change and the mismanagement of the environment by municipal, provincial, and federal governments actors has resulted in habitat loss, biodiversity loss and economic disasters for Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS animals on factory farms are one of the most unregulated and unprotected groups of animals in BC and Canada, and their mistreatment during raising, transport and unethical slaughtering practices is a punishable act under the *Criminal Code*, but the lack of regulation and oversight bodies prevents it from occurring.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council reaffirms support for First Nations exercising inherent title and rights over their territories and caring for animals in those territories, including through farming, with respect, reciprocity, and dignity;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council fully rejects the current legal and regulatory landscape of factory farming, a system of farming where a lot of animals are kept in a small closed area in order to produce a large amount of meat, eggs, or milk as cheaply as possible, due to the lack of accountability and oversight of generally accepted practices of animal management and protections on factory farms, and the lack of available funding to support better animal welfare practices;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council calls on Canada and BC to work with First Nations farmers and ranchers to support First Nations farmers and ranchers who have been impacted by climate change, including forest fires, catastrophic floods and habitat degradation;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council calls on Canada and BC to work with First Nations to co-develop legislation and regulations in alignment with the UN Declaration that reduce the impacts of climate change and habitat loss due to factory farming, and reduce the risk of disease and suffering of animals on factory farms, and that provide funding to communities in order to support the transition to better animal welfare practices more aligned with a cruelty-free stance toward animals.

Moved: Judy Wilson, Osoyoos Indian Band (Proxy)
Seconded: Chief Don Tom, Tsartlip First Nation
Disposition: Carried
Date: June 8, 2023