



Hon. Omar Alghabra  
Minister of Transport  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Hon. Seamus O'Regan  
Minister of Labour  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

July 5, 2023

Dear Ministers,

Further to our letter sent June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, regarding British Columbia's ports strike, and based on the development of the negotiations, I share with you the Canadian Produce Marketing Association's stand on the matter:

On behalf of the Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable sector, I am writing to express our deep concern about the ongoing labour disruption at the ports in British Columbia. While we respect the right to collective bargaining and believe that the most effective agreements are written at the negotiating table, we strongly encourage the government to work urgently with all parties to reach a resolution to mitigate the significant potential negative impacts of this labour disruption on our already fragile supply chain and already elevated food prices.


The Port of Vancouver is Canada's largest port and the third largest in North America by cargo tons. Vancouver's port enables the trade of \$305 billion in goods with more than 170 world economies; port activities sustain 115,300 jobs, \$7 billion in wages, and \$11.9 billion in GDP across Canada. In addition to growing congestion at BC's ports, there is also significant concern that this disruption will aggravate backlogs in other shipping modes and create congestion at other marine ports.

To mitigate the growing cargo bottleneck at British Columbia's ports, the Government of Canada should focus on increasing transportation capacity to ensure the uninterrupted flow of food to Canadians. In addition, we request that the government implement a formalized process, as it has done for grains, to allow the movement of fresh produce in the event of a labour or other disruption.

**If negotiations are not concluded swiftly, it is of utmost importance that the Government of Canada use every tool at its disposal, including binding arbitration or back to work legislation, to avoid job losses, increased food insecurity, and higher food prices.**

We strongly urge the federal government to use all available resources to facilitate reconciliation between these two parties and to ensure that our essential and perishable goods can continue to reach Canadians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line.

Ron Lemaire  
President,  
Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Cc: Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food  
Hon. Marco Mendicino, Minister of Public Safety