

NOV 09 2007

File: 0280-30  
Ref: 153866

Kim Benson, Chair  
Islands Trust Council  
200 – 1627 Fort St  
Victoria BC V8R 1H8

Dear Ms. Benson:

Thank you for your letter dated October 3, 2007 regarding the new Meat Inspection Regulation (MIR) and the importance of maintaining adequate slaughter capacity within the Islands Trust area. I apologize for the delay in my response.

Government recognizes the issues that transitioning to the province-wide regulation presents both provincially and locally. We believe the provision of the Meat Industry Enhancement Strategy, the one-year extension of the original 2006 deadline, the \$5 million Meat Transition Assistance Program, and the recently announced transitional licence under MIR, will go a long way toward addressing the concerns you expressed. The transitional Class C licence from the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) will enable some plants to temporarily continue operations, selling their product as uninspected meat for farm gate sales only.

Further information regarding the new Class C licence is available on the BCCDC website at [http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/protect/mi\\_abattoir.html](http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/protect/mi_abattoir.html). General questions regarding the new Class C licence should be directed to:

Larry Copeland, Program Director  
Food Protection Services  
British Columbia Centre for Disease Control  
Telephone: 604 660-5357      Facsimile: 604 660-6628

There are now 13 provincially licensed plants in the Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands area, providing significant capacity for poultry and red meat species. The BC Food Processors Association (BCFPA) is working with several more proposed abattoirs to assist them in becoming licensed. If you would like further information on provincially licensed plants this can be found on the BCCDC website at <http://www.bccdc.org>.

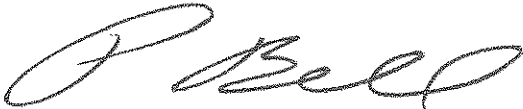
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Ministry staff will continue to work with producers, the BCFPA and the Ministries of Health and Environment to make this transition successful. Additional information and contacts for MIES staff and MTAP is available on the BC Food Processors Association website at <http://www.bcfpa.ca/mtap.html>.

Government recognizes the importance of safe local meat supplies for consumers in British Columbia and the economic and environmental benefits of a viable, local meat industry. We are confident that measures taken to date will enable British Columbia livestock producers and processors to develop the facilities necessary to provide safe meat products for growing markets in all parts of British Columbia.

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Bell', written in a cursive style.

Pat Bell  
Minister

pc: Honourable George Abbott  
Minister of Health

Larry Copeland  
BC Centre for Disease Control  
655 12th Ave W  
Vancouver BC V5Z 4R4

His Worship Mayor Bob Turner  
and Members of Council  
981 Artisan Lane  
Bowen Island BC V0N 1G0