

February 18, 2026

The Honourable Nina Krieger, M.L.A.
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Government of British Columbia
PO Box 9010 Stn Prov
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Sent via email: PSSG.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Subject: BCAC on Motor Vehicle Act and Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy

Dear Minister,

On behalf of British Columbia's farmers and ranchers, thank you for your ongoing support to the agriculture sector and for taking the time to meet with us at Ag Day in Victoria last fall.

The Premier established a Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy in 2025, which included representation from government and the entire food industry, from producers to processors and retailers. The Premier's Task Force issued several recommendations, including that **"...the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General amend the Motor Vehicle Act and Motor Vehicle Act Regulations to extend the exemption from holding a valid B.C. driver's license to Agricultural Stream temporary foreign workers (TFWs) currently, and extend the exemption to TFWs under the new proposed Temporary Foreign Worker Agriculture and Fish Processing Stream once implemented."**

This recommendation reflects a significant and pressing issue. Some years ago, the Motor Vehicle Act and Motor Vehicle Act Regulations were amended to allow workers recruited under the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) to be exempted from the requirement to hold a valid B.C. driver's license for up to 12 months, so long as such workers possessed a valid driver's license from their home jurisdiction. However, this exemption was not extended to workers recruited under the similar Agricultural Stream (Ag Stream), who must continue to apply for a B.C. driver's license, including the successful completion of a knowledge test and road test or else obtain an International Driving Permit in their home jurisdiction.

This licensing requirement for visitors under Ag Stream presents a financial and logistical burden for both workers and employers. For workers, delays in obtaining a B.C. driver's license can lead to reduced independence and limited access to essential services, social activities, and community resources. Additionally, the requirement to surrender their valid driver's license from their home country to obtain a B.C. license may interfere with their ability to drive upon returning home, potentially impacting their livelihoods. For employers, this also poses a challenge, as many Ag Stream job descriptions approved under the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) include driving as an essential duty. When workers are unable to drive, it hinders their ability to fulfill their role and affects the overall efficiency of farm operations. Oftentimes, Ag Stream workers are also employed in rural areas where there is limited or no public transit.

We believe that the Premier's Task Force recommendation can be quickly fulfilled through modest amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act and Motor Vehicle Act Regulations. As Division 30C.01 of the Regulations establishes the exemption for visitors under the SAWP, we support the inclusion of a new

Division 30C.02 establishing a similar exemption for Ag Stream workers. To ensure consistency with the Act, Section 34(1.1)(d)(iii) of the Motor Vehicle Act would need to be amended, such that the exemption could apply to a person who “has entered into an agreement under which the person will work in B.C., as part of a program or in the circumstances specified by regulation, for a period longer than 6 months but shorter than two years” rather than the currently prescribed limit of one year. This would allow Ag Stream workers to enjoy the same exemption as those under SAWP but may require them to apply for a B.C. driver’s license if their initial term is renewed.

Delivering on this Task Force recommendation would demonstrate to the agriculture sector and to British Columbians the seriousness of the Premier’s commitment to food security. It would also present limited to no costs to government to implement.

BCAC and its members would appreciate it if you could work with your colleagues in government to introduce the changes necessary to implement this Premier’s Task Force recommendation in the autumn legislative session this year. If a meeting to further discuss would be helpful, please do not hesitate to contact Danielle Synotte, BCAC’s Executive Director, via email (dsynotte@bcac.ca) or via telephone (604-854-4454).

On behalf of our members, thank you for your kind support in this matter!

Sincerely,

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

Jennifer Woike, President
BC Agriculture Council