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## **FBC-ABC Annual General Meeting Report on the Affairs of the Association**

### **Labour and Temporary Foreign Workers**

#### **CO-CHAIR OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUSTRY-LED NATIONAL WORKFORCE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD & BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING**

Under the leadership of former FBC-ABC CEO, Kathleen Sullivan, FBC-ABC continued its work on the development of an industry-led National Workforce Strategic Framework for Agriculture and Food & Beverage Manufacturing. The Framework will set out a comprehensive plan for Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors to achieve workforce stability by 2030. Together, over 100 stakeholders are undertaking work around five key areas: Perception and Awareness of Industry and Careers; People and Workplace Culture; Immigration and Foreign Workers; Skill Development; and Automation and Technology. In November, the Co-Chairs of the project were proud to submit to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food an interim report on the work.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD OF INVESTMENTS IN TWO LABOUR PROJECTS AT FBC-ABC'S POLICY BREAKFAST**

In February, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food attended and spoke at FBC-ABC's policy breakfast to kick off Canadian Ag Day. At the event, she announced investments in two projects related to the labour needs of Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors. These projects will complement the work being done on the National Framework.

#### **CHAIR OF QUARTERLY MEETINGS ON THE TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKER PROGRAM**

FBC-ABC continued to Chair quarterly meetings on the TFWP with colleagues at Employment and Social Development Canada. Participants in these meetings include interested FBC-ABC members, in addition to other industry stakeholders.

#### **PARTICIPATION IN IRCC'S CONSULTATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF CANADA'S IMMIGRATION SYSTEM**

In March, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship announced the start of a broad-based engagement initiative aimed at exploring how immigration policies and programs can support a shared vision for Canada's future. FBC-ABC participated in these consultations through a written submission focused on the need for continued recognition of the critical role of foreign workers in addressing the sector's labour needs; clearly defined pathways to permanent residency; and greater transparency in the TFWP application process.

### **Competitiveness**

#### **PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION BUREAU'S STUDY ON COMPETITIVENESS IN THE GROCERY SECTOR**

In October, the Competition Bureau launched a market study of grocery competition in Canada. FBC-ABC provided a submission which urged the Bureau to amend the scope of its market study of retail grocery competition in Canada to include issues related to the purchase of groceries from suppliers by retailers. FBC-ABC further participated in a meeting with the provincial associations and the Bureau to discuss the submission.

### **CHAIR OF THE FOOD INDUSTRY PALLET TASK FORCE**

Beginning last spring, FBC-ABC distributed a survey to members in regards to concerns being raised about a shortage of pallets. After identifying the scope of the problem, FBC-ABC coordinated and led meetings of industry associations and CHEP to discuss the shortage of shipping pallets in the food and beverage sector to identify immediate measures to address the issue and mitigate its impact.

### **PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL SUPPLY CHAIN TASK FORCE'S CONSULTATIONS**

In August, FBC-ABC was invited to meet with the National Supply Chain Task Force, as it sought to study supply chain challenges. FBC-ABC spoke about the impact of supply chain disruptions in recent years on the food and beverage manufacturing sector, and provided recommendations on ways to mitigate supply chain disruptions in future events. Many of the Task Force's final recommendations aligned with those provided by FBC-ABC.

### **LEADERSHIP ON THE GROCERY CODE OF CONDUCT**

FBC-ABC left the code of conduct development process in November 2022, after deciding that the code being developed would be insufficient in addressing the needs of Canada's small and mid-sized food manufacturers. In advance of the May stakeholder consultations, FBC-ABC drafted and circulated an analysis of the proposed code to better support the responses of members.

## **Government Relations and Advocacy**

### **SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND MINISTER OF FINANCE'S FEDERAL BUDGET 2023 CONSULTATIONS**

In August, and again in February, FBC-ABC provided a written submission to the Federal Budget 2023 consultations, focused on the most critical issues facing Canada's food and beverage manufacturers. Recommendations included measures to address chronic labour shortages and skills gaps; changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP); a coordinated and consistent approach to support supply chain resilience for Canada's food system; and measures to protect Canada's small and mid-sized food and beverage manufacturers from the effects of market power imbalance brought on by the high concentration in Canada's grocery retail sector.

### **APPEARANCES BEFORE HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDING COMMITTEE'S**

Last May, former FBC-ABC CEO, Kathleen Sullivan, appeared before the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities to speak to the state of Canada's supply chain. Her testimony focused on the impact on industry of labour shortages, as well as infrastructure disruptions, such as border closures and flooding.

In November, former FBC-ABC CEO, Kathleen Sullivan, appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food to speak to global and domestic food insecurity. Her testimony focused on supporting and stabilizing Canada's food system to ensure global and domestic food security.

In March, James Donaldson, CEO of BC Food & Beverage, appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food on behalf of FBC-ABC to speak to food price inflation. His testimony focused on the impact of global supply chain disruptions on food price inflation, and the unique challenges being faced by processors.

### **CHAIR OF THE FOOD SECTOR NETWORK**

FBC-ABC continued to Co-Chair Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Food Sector Network, which provides a standing forum for discussion and information sharing among food system specific industry stakeholders and governments.