



Friday, April 17, 2026

The Honourable Lena Metlege Diab, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

House of Commons

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A

Minister@cic.gc.ca

Subject: Request for Clarity and Industry Prioritization in Budget 2025 Permanent Residency Transition Measures

Dear Minister:

On behalf of **Food and Beverage Canada (FBC-ABC) and the six provincial and regional food and beverage manufacturing associations**, we are writing to follow up on the Government of Canada's Budget 2025 announcement to accelerate the transition of up to 33,000 temporary foreign workers to permanent residency in 2026 and 2027.

FBC-ABC welcomed this announcement as a positive step toward addressing persistent labour challenges facing Canada's food and beverage manufacturing industry. However, **the absence of program details to date has created significant uncertainty for employers and workers alike, particularly as we move further into 2026 without clarity on implementation timelines or eligibility criteria.**

Canada's food and beverage manufacturing industry is the country's largest manufacturing employer, employing more than 320,000 Canadians and generating nearly \$120B in annual revenues. Across the country, our members rely on a stable and skilled workforce to maintain production, support food security, and deliver value-added products to domestic and international markets. **A stable workforce is not only a business imperative – it is fundamental to Canada's food security and food sovereignty.**

Foreign workers are an essential part of this workforce. Some companies – across both urban and rural ridings – **report that up to 20% of their workforce is currently made up of foreign workers on open work permits**, filling critical roles that in some cases remain difficult to recruit for domestically. These are not short-term or seasonal positions, but integral jobs that require experience, training, and continuity. At the same time, success in accessing permanent



residency pathways through existing programs, including the Provincial Nominee Programs, has been limited, further compounding workforce instability.

In this context, the lack of information regarding the Budget 2025 commitment is increasingly challenging. **Employers are unable to plan, and workers face growing uncertainty about their ability to remain in Canada.** In some cases, businesses are already losing experienced employees who are required to return to their home countries due to expiring work permits and the absence of viable permanent residency pathways.

We respectfully request greater clarity from the Government on the design and implementation of this initiative, and **we strongly encourage the Government to ensure that this initiative prioritizes workers in food and beverage manufacturing, including those employed in both rural and urban settings.** While rural labour shortages are well recognized, many urban-based facilities face equally acute and persistent labour challenges.

Greater predictability in immigration pathways is essential to maintaining a stable food and beverage manufacturing workforce. **Without clear and timely information, both employers and employees are left in a state of uncertainty that undermines workforce retention, business planning, and ultimately Canada's ability to maintain a secure, sovereign, and resilient food system.**

We would welcome the opportunity to engage with you and your official on this topic.

Sincerely,

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