

PRESS RELEASE #2

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 5, 2025



UNIVERSAL OSTRICH FARMS URGES MINISTERIAL ACTION AFTER BREACH OF SUPREME COURT STAY ORDER AND ADDITIONAL SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS

Edgewood, British Columbia – Universal Ostrich Farms Inc. (UOF) has filed an Addendum to its Request for Ministerial Reconsideration with the Honourable Heath MacDonald, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Deputy Minister Lawrence Hanson. The addendum, submitted November 3rd, 2025, supplements the original request filed September 9, 2025, under section 48 of the *Health of Animals Act* (HAA).

The filing clarifies serious jurisdictional, scientific, and procedural errors by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and calls for immediate ministerial intervention before the Supreme Court of Canada issues its ruling on November 6, 2025.

1. Jurisdictional Breach and Stay Order Violation

Despite a valid Supreme Court Stay Order issued on September 24, 2025, CFIA and RCMP officers forcibly removed farm owners David Bilinski and Karen Espersen from their private property, disabled security cameras, and assumed control of the site.

On November 3rd, 2025, CFIA reportedly issued a letter indicating preparations for a “kill and cleanup” operation this week, while the Stay Order remained in effect and before any Ministerial response had been provided.

These actions are not only unlawful but amount to contempt of court. They directly violate property rights protected under the Canadian Bill of Rights, section 1(a).

2. Animal Welfare Violations Under CFIA Custody

Since the CFIA assumed control, UOF has documented serious animal welfare breaches, including:

- An ostrich named Spirit dying, without adequate vet care, on a manure pile after hours of visible distress.
- Repeated lack of access to clean water and proper/adequate amount feed.
- Injuries sustained due to neglect and inadequate veterinary supervision.

These incidents, described in detail in the November 3rd, 2025, addendum, constitute potential violations of Section 445.1 of the Criminal Code of Canada, which prohibits causing unnecessary suffering to animals.

3. New Scientific Evidence and International Support

The addendum includes additional evidence from Dr. Byram Bridle (March 3, 2025) and Dr. Steven Pelech (September 21, 2025), confirming that the infection identified at UOF was **hybrid** (low/high pathogenicity) and that the infection has “burned out” naturally.

- No illness or deaths have occurred in over 290 days since January 15, 2025
- The herd remains healthy with no symptoms of avian influenza, proof of natural “burn-out”
- Ostriches are ratites, not poultry, and should not be subjected to poultry “stamping-out” protocols under the [Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Support \(FADES\)](#) plan

Because the ostriches have remained completely healthy and asymptomatic since January 15th, 2025, the past ten (10) months, the scientific rationale for “stamping-out” is no longer valid. According to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), eradication measures such as mass destruction are justified **only** where there is active transmission or confirmed disease presence. Those conditions no longer exist at UOF and, under WOAH guidance, the policy of “stamping-out” should therefore be abandoned.

Affidavits by Dr. Bridle and Dr. Pelech, further validate these findings.

4. International Collaboration and U.S. Involvement

Letters from U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., dated [May 23, 2025](#) and [July 15, 2025](#), urged Canada to preserve the ostrich herd, citing its value to joint immunity research under U.S. and Canada cooperation programs.

Secretary Kennedy’s July 15th, 2025, letter stated:

“If Canada prefers not to host continued research, the Department would appreciate the opportunity to engage with the CFIA to discuss options to perform this research in the United States.”

Destroying the herd, the addendum warns, would eliminate a globally unique biotechnological resource, undermine North American research collaboration, and compromise Canada’s international reputation for science-based decision-making.

5. Call for Ministerial Accountability and Immediate Action

UOF’s addendum formally requests that Minister Heath MacDonald:

1. Acknowledge and seize jurisdiction over the pending Reconsideration Request.
2. Declare CFIA’s September 22, 2025, response invalid and ultra vires.
3. Set aside the December 31, 2024, Notice to Dispose.

4. Issue a Ministerial decision before November 6, 2025.
5. Launch an independent animal welfare investigation.
6. Restore custody and care of the ostrich herd to UOF.
7. Lift unauthorized airspace restrictions over the property.
8. Order a risk-managed alternative control protocol under Section 13(2)(a) of the HAA.
9. Investigate discrepancies between CFIA and WOAHP disease reporting.
10. Withdraw CFIA personnel and restore full property possession to UOF.
11. Investigate potential CFIA/RCMP breaches of law and the Stay Order.

6. What the Public Can Do

The Save Our Ostriches campaign urges Canadians to act immediately by doing these things:

- 1.) Write to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Heath MacDonald and Lawrence Hanson Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and demand he responds to the pending Request for Ministerial Reconsideration before the Supreme Court hearing.
 - heath.macdonald@parl.gc.ca
 - aaafc.minister-ministre.aac@agr.gc.ca
 - lawrence.hanson@agr.gc.ca
- 2.) Share this story publicly to help ensure transparency and accountability.
- 3.) Visit www.saveourostriches.com/take-action for letter templates, updates, and background documents.

7. What the Media Needs to Know

- Hybrid (low and high pathogenicity) was confirmed, not HPAI alone, at UOF. This translates into reduced pathogenicity which support “burn out” as seen in the ostriches.
- The herd has been healthy and symptom-free for 10 months, demonstrating natural viral “burn-out.”
- Under WOAHP standards, the reason for “stamping-out” no longer exists and the policy should be abandoned immediately.
- CFIA’s “stamping-out” plan is being applied to non-poultry research animals, contrary to both domestic and international definitions.
- CFIA and RCMP actions occurred in defiance of a Supreme Court Stay Order.
- The U.S. government has formally intervened, requesting preservation of the research herd.
- Additional peer-reviewed science supports UOF’s findings of natural immunity and low pathogenicity.

8. Closing Statement

Universal Ostrich Farms stands for science, due process, and compassion.

When the ostriches have been healthy for nearly a year, with no disease or symptoms, continuing to pursue a 'stamping-out' order defies both law and science. Even the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) makes clear that such measures are meant only for active disease outbreaks, conditions that simply do not exist at UOF.

Immediate ministerial action is both a legal and moral imperative to prevent irreversible harm and restore public confidence in Canada's agricultural governance.

MEDIA CONTACT

Katie Pasitney

Tel: (250) 870-8246

Universal Ostrich Farms Inc.

301 Langille Road, Edgewood, BC V0G 1J0

Email: SaveOurOstriches@gmail.com

Website: www.SaveOurOstriches.com

X: <https://x.com/OstrichFarmBC> (@OstrichFarmBC)

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurOstriches>

IG: <https://www.instagram.com/SaveOurOstriches>