

# Compliance Directive

## *AGRICULTURAL OPERATION PRACTICES ACT, RSA 2000, c A-7*

**Directive #:** CD 25-14

**Date issued:** July 11, 2025

**Issued by:** Fraser Grant, Inspector  
Compliance and Enforcement Division  
Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB), Airdrie Office

**Issued to:** Ernest Israelson (landowner) and Christopher Israelson (operator)  
Didsbury, AB

**Attention:** **Christopher Israelson**

This directive relates to unauthorized construction at a beef feedlot confined feeding operation (CFO) which is located on land owned by Ernest Israelson. The feedlot is managed and operated by Christopher Israelson. This construction has been done without a permit under the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA). The three unauthorized pens, formerly operated as a seasonal feeding and bedding site (SFBS), now have transitioned into beef feedlot CFO pens and no longer meet the requirements of a SFBS.

The operation is located at SE 24-31-03 W5M (the site), in Mountain View County, in the Province of Alberta, approximately 20 km west of Didsbury, AB.

### **Background and investigation**

On June 19, 2025, Christopher Israelson, operator of a 1,500 head beef feeder feedlot, submitted a Part 1 application to the NRCB (Application RA25042) on behalf of Ernest Israelson, the current landowner. The Part 1 application indicated that he would like to obtain a permit for his pre-2001 facilities (facilities constructed pre-2002 or pre-AOPA may be considered deemed facilities), his developed facilities from 2023, and for a proposed expansion to the feedyard.

On July 7, 2025, Approval Officer Sarah Neff and myself conducted an inspection at the feedlot. Prior to conducting the inspection, I reviewed aerial imagery, which indicated that there were five existing pens (Pens 1-5) that had been constructed pre-AOPA and may be considered deemed CFO facilities (Appendix A). Adjacent to the pre-AOPA facilities, is a former seasonal pen (Pen 6) that as of 2024 transitioned into a feedlot pen. South of the former seasonal pen are two additional pens (Pens 7 and 8)

that were constructed in 2023. These pens are currently used seasonally (outside of the grazing period) however, present characteristics of a typical CFO feedlot pen.

During my inspection, I referenced NRCB's Operational Policy 2015-2 (CFO/SFBS policy), [Distinguishing Between Confined Feeding Operations and Seasonal Feeding and Bedding Sites \(For Cattle Operations\)](#). To determine the CFO characteristics, I referenced Table 1 (for facilities adjacent to a CFO) of the CFO/SFBS policy. The following factors and characteristics suggest that pens 6 through 8 are CFO facilities:

- Feeding area: the facility utilizes fence line feeding with permanent bunks with a concrete apron.
- Manure management: manure is concentrated in the pens and must be removed and spread or stored outside of the pens.
- Infrastructure: there are permanent feed bunks and steel pipe fencing that surround each pen.
- Vegetation: the pens are not grass pastures or annually cropped.

### **Unauthorized construction**

AOPA's permit requirements are intended to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination and surface water runoff, and to lessen the nuisance impacts of CFOs on neighbours. Without a permit, the regulatory objects in AOPA may be compromised.

The *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* ("AOPA") at section 14(1) prohibits a person from commencing construction, expansion or modification of a manure storage facility or manure collection area for which an authorization is required pursuant to the regulations.

"Confined feeding operation" is defined in AOPA as:

fenced or enclosed land or buildings where livestock are confined for the purpose of growing, sustaining, finishing or breeding by means other than grazing and any other building or structure directly related to that purpose but does not include residences, livestock seasonal feeding and bedding sites, equestrian stables, auction markets, race tracks or exhibition grounds;

A seasonal feeding and bedding site, as pens 6-8 operated until recently, is not a CFO and does not require a permit under AOPA. However, since pens 6-8 are currently being operated as CFO pens, they require a permit.

Under section 2 of the Part 2 Matters Regulation, an approval permit is required for a CFO containing 500 or more head of beef feeders (450 – 900 lbs). This directive is not a grandfathering determination. However, based on my observations, my conversations with Christopher Israelson, and my site inspection on July 7, 2025, I conclude that Christopher Israelson has contravened section 13(1) of AOPA for the reason that they have expanded a CFO without a permit, when a permit is required.

Under section 39(1) of AOPA, an inspector may issue an enforcement order to a person if, in the inspector's opinion, the person is, among other things, contravening

the act or its regulations. However, as this is the first enforcement action at this site, the operator self-reported, and following the NRCB Compliance and Enforcement Policy, a compliance directive is being issued at this time rather than an enforcement order.

**DIRECTIVE:**

To mitigate any possible risks to the environment and potential nuisances to any affected neighbours, Christopher and Ernest Israelson shall take all necessary and appropriate measures to comply with AOPA and its regulations. In particular, Christopher and Ernest Israelson shall:

1. If the site continues to be managed as an above threshold CFO and if an NRCB permit for the new manure collection area(s) of the unauthorized pens has not been obtained:
  - a. By March 1, 2026, depopulate the three unauthorized feedlot pens identified as Pens 6 – 8 on the Google Earth Pro Aerial Imagery from April 2023 (Appendix A), and
  - b. By March 15, 2026, you must remove all the manure from the three unauthorized pens identified as Pens 6-8 on the Google Earth Pro Aerial Imagery from April 2023 (Appendix A), and cease using the pens for CFO purposes.

Any of the deadline dates contained above may be extended in writing, but only by the NRCB, at the sole discretion of the NRCB.

All actions required above shall be in compliance with AOPA and its implementing regulations and shall not violate any other law. These requirements, including any deadlines, remain in effect until otherwise directed by the NRCB in writing.

Given the seriousness of unauthorized construction, the NRCB posts compliance directives for unauthorized construction on the NRCB's public website.

The NRCB may access the land and structures for the purpose of assessing compliance with this directive.

If Christopher and Ernest Israelson fail to comply with this directive, the NRCB may take additional enforcement action.

(Original signed)

Fraser Grant

Senior Inspector, Compliance and Enforcement Division  
Natural Resources Conservation Board

Cc: Mountain View County, Development and Planning

**Appendix**

A. Google Earth Pro Aerial Imagery April 2023 (labelled by Fraser Grant)



# Israelson

April 2023

APPENDIX A: Google Earth Pro Aerial Imagery April 2023 (labelled by Fraser Grant)

Israelson

Pen 6:  
Unauthorized pen  
(formerly used as a  
SFBS, now CFO)

Pen 5: Pre-2002

Pen 4: Pre-2002

Pen 3: Pre-2002

Pen 2: Pre-2002

Pen 1: Pre-2002

Pen 7: Approximate  
location of  
unauthorized pen

Pen 8: Approximate  
location of  
unauthorized pen

Google Earth

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