

Bulletin Update #1

July 6, 2023

The NRCB has received numerous complaints regarding odours in High River from Rimrock Feeders feedlot over the past 12 months. This bulletin has been created to help answer most questions the NRCB receives about Rimrock Feeders and the NRCB. The bulletin will be updated as new information is available.

NRCB Inspections

In response to this file, NRCB inspectors have been onsite at the Rimrock feedlot and in the town of High River many times over the past year. Inspections have occurred at all times of the day and night (including visits that were not announced to the operators) to monitor odours, speak to residents, and consult with the Rimrock operators on management options.

These visits have found that Rimrock Feeders is meeting the technical requirements of the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA). During on-site inspections NRCB inspectors have investigated the total number of animals on site, the type of feed and feed additives used, as well as manure management practices including pen cleaning, manure stockpiling, and manure spreading. NRCB inspectors have found that Rimrock Feeders is operating similarly to other feedlots in southern Alberta, including feedlots that also have pens lined with roller compacted concrete.

NRCB Complaint Process

The NRCB reviews every complaint it receives. Our focus is to work with Rimrock Feeders and the people of High River to monitor odour levels related to the feedlot and to look for ways to minimize their impact on the community. NRCB management is consulted with and informed regularly about the file, as are Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, and other regulatory agencies.

Complaint/Reference Numbers: All complaints received by the NRCB are given a unique file number in our internal database system. Every complaint is stored in Rimrock's file profile within that database. Any complaint can be easily searched using either the date or name of the complainant. Due to operational demands, the NRCB will not be providing reference numbers to complainants. If you need a reference number for your complaint, please call our 24 hr-reporting line at 1-866-383-6722 and file your complaint through that system.

Requesting a call back from an inspector: Due to the volume of complaints and ongoing operational demands, inspectors will not be calling back all complainants that request a call back. This update addresses the most common questions received by inspectors.

Air Monitoring

The NRCB has purchased and installed a new air quality monitoring unit (a Scentroid CTair), in High River. This is in addition to the air monitoring laboratory installed by the Calgary Region Airshed Zone (CRAZ). The NRCB is also in the process of purchasing a second CTair unit.

The data from the CRAZ station is readily available to the public for review. The data from the NRCB air monitor is uploaded onto the NRCB website on an ongoing basis. Going forward, the NRCB will continue to compare the air monitoring data to the complaints received as well as activities at the feedlot (such as pen cleaning), in an effort to determine the sources or causes of the strong odours residents are experiencing.

Alberta has ambient [air quality objectives and guidelines](#), many of which are health-based. To date, the CRAZ technical committee's monthly review of data has found no exceedances of air quality objectives from their air monitoring unit in High River, except for those associated with wildfire smoke events. The NRCB has also not found any exceedances of air quality objectives in data from the CTair unit to date.

Rimrock Feeders

Rimrock Feeders purchased the High River operation in 2019 from Western Feedlots. This operation has a grandfathered permitted livestock number of 35,000 beef finishers. Western Feedlots, managed the same number of cattle while in operation. To date, Rimrock has not exceeded their permitted number.

The NRCB has not received any applications for expansion from Rimrock Feeders, nor are we aware of any intent to try and expand.

Rimrock/Tidewater Renewables Biodigester

The NRCB has no regulatory authority over the proposed biodigester and is not responsible for reviewing the impact assessments on air quality and odour for the proposed biodigester facility. Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) will be responsible for permitting the biodigester facility and any questions should be directed to them.

Some of the frequent questions received about the proposed biodigester can be answered in the following points.

- If approved, the biodigester will be located on the same quarter section of land as the Rimrock feedlot, approximately 200 metres northwest of the feedlot.
- As of July 5, 2023 the biodigester has not been approved, nor has any construction begun.
- The earthwork to prepare the site for construction was allowed by Foothills County and Alberta Environment and Protected Areas. It does not constitute a permit in place for the proposed biodigester.
- All of the manure produced at the Rimrock feedlot would be used in the biodigester.