

Report to Mistawasis Nêhiyawak
April 2025
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Agricultural Benefits Claim
(commonly referred to as the “Cows and Plows claim”)

The Claim

The claim relates to the Crown’s failure to fulfill the treaty benefits owed to the First Nation under the terms of Treaty 6. Treaty No. 6 expressly provided that the Government of Canada was to supply the First Nations with specified articles for cultivating the soil, such as hoes, spades, ploughs, harrows, scythes, whetstones, hay forks, reaping hooks, axes, cross-cut saws, hand-saws, pit-saws, files, grindstones, and an auger. Treaty No. 6 further provided that each Chief was to be supplied with additional articles for use of their Band, including one chest of carpenter’s tools, an oxen, a bull, cows, a boar, sows, and one hand-mill.

Research and Claim Submission

Joan Holmes & Associates was retained to undertake research and provide an expert report in relation to this claim. The focus of the research was on the terms of Treaty 6 regarding benefits, the population of the First Nation which is necessary to determine the benefits that should have been provided, and the actual benefits that were paid/distributed. A Final Research Report was prepared in 2022. A Claim Submission was prepared and filed with *Specific Claims Branch* on October 10, 2023.

Negotiation of Claim

On February 5, 2025, Canada informed the First Nation that it had completed its review of the Claim and offered to seek a negotiated settlement of the Claim. The First Nation subsequently executed a Negotiation Protocol Agreement outlining the negotiation process to be followed. The Nation agreed that the negotiation of the Claim will be on a confidential, privileged and without prejudice basis.

Appointment of Federal Negotiator

Canada has appointed Demetre Kontos as the Federal Negotiator for this claim. The role of the Federal Negotiator is to facilitate and guide the resolution of the claim.

Current Status

Due to the federal election, the federal public service has to follow the “caretaker convention”. This means that certain governmental activities, including negotiations, have to be put on pause. Following the election, meetings will be scheduled to commence negotiations.