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PRESS RELEASE

Province Announces Aid for Beef Producers Impacted by 2011 Flood

May 24, 2011 (WINNIPEG, MB) – The Provincial Government announced today the creation of a special recovery package for those affected by this year’s flood crisis. In his address, Premier Selinger said the development of the ‘Flood 2011 Building and Recovery Action Plan’ focuses on a three-part strategy: to build the future, strengthen communities and help families and producers. For beef producers in the province of Manitoba, this specifically will mean the provision of immediate and long-term assistance for those impacted by 2011 flooding.

The flood recovery compensation packages announced today for beef producers specifically addresses issues that MBP has brought forward and lobbied for:

- 1) Shoal Lakes Compensation Program (*Compensation for producers who lost income of hay and pasture land in 2010 and 2011; and transportation costs related to moving animals and feed that was threatened by flood waters. An additional element is a voluntary buy-out program with transitional assistance for an additional year for producers impacted by high-water level.*)
 - 2) Livestock Mortality Program (*Compensation for producers who lost cattle in April blizzard.*)
 - 3) Lake Manitoba Financial Assistance Program (*Financial assistance for: producers to remain in business by helping with costs to rent alternative pastures or feeding sites and transporting feed and livestock; livestock damage to pastures and livestock infrastructure; and damage and lost yield on tame forage and annual crop land.*)
- (To learn more, visit www.mbbeef.ca and click on the links as indicated on our home page.)

Manitoba Beef Producers President, Major Jay Fox, stated, “MBP commends the Province for the leadership they are providing at the provincial level with the announcement of special aid and long-term support for those affected by the flood event of 2011. On behalf of our beef producers, we extend our thanks for getting a meaningful recovery package in place in the swift timeframe that was needed.”

The flooding crisis in Manitoba has been dubbed the 1-in-300 Year Flood – unprecedented in modern history for many. For producers in those areas surrounding Lake Manitoba it is unparalleled and far from over. “This flooding crisis has seen many ranchers with hay, forage and pasture fields and homes drowned out, having to evacuate their herds and homes in exigent circumstances. Some will be unable to return potentially for a number of years. Others will be affected by difficulty obtaining feed for their livestock and re-establish feed crops”, said Fox. “Though more details will be forthcoming shortly, we are very pleased that this urgent funding will allow producers to recover losses from livestock

mortality, pasture damages and restoration and will enable producers to further manage and plan for necessary transportation, feed and further recovery". (MBP will make details accessible to producers on their website as they become available. Visit www.mbbeef.ca for current information.)

MBP also applauds the Premier's commitment to long-term disaster mitigation through infrastructure advances, expanding mitigation and flood control projects. "Proper water management and drainage is vital moving forward", said Fox. "We encourage the government to work towards solutions in the proper management of water in all of Manitoba."

The flooding crisis of the last few weeks has certainly affected many Manitobans – both in urban and rural areas. And though it's been an extremely difficult time for many, Fox stated that we've seen the true spirit of what it means to be a Manitoban. "We've been able to witness neighbours, friends and even strangers rally together, working side by side to bring help, relief and support to those in need. That support has been experienced by many of our beef producers as well. MBP has worked together with MAFRI, who heard us and responded, to get the help for our producers that has been desperately needed. They worked tirelessly through short term solutions to address the immediate needs of our producers and, through daily communication have worked diligently toward the longer term solutions implemented. This announcement of aid and resources will help to rebuild these shattered operations and communities. The Manitoba Beef Producers wishes to acknowledge specifically the Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) team. We are grateful that recovery measures have been announced and we wish to once again thank Minister Struthers and Premier Selinger and this government."

Manitoba Beef Producers is the exclusive voice of the beef industry in Manitoba. Our role and mission is to represent our beef producers through communication, research, advocacy and education. We provide this representation within industry, to government, to the beef consumer and general public. These efforts take place to strengthen our industry viability, improve prosperity and ensure a sustainable future for the beef industry in Manitoba for the benefit of all our producers. The Manitoba Beef Producers represents 8,000 beef producers across the province.

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