



## NEWS RELEASE

### Provincial Flooding Conditions Require Prudent Action

**June 21, 2010 (WINNIPEG, MB)** – The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association (MCPA) has requested to meet with the province in order to address the current flooding and excess moisture conditions in the various regions of Manitoba. In order to provide feed for the cattle industry looking forward, Manitoba's potential flooding crises must be addressed with a measure of preparedness.

"We need to proactively and strategically adopt a number of priorities moving forward," said Sheila Mowat, General Manager of the MCPA. "The current wet and flooded conditions in our province are seeing many farmers with unseeded and flooded acres. It is estimated that there will be 8.5-12 million acres in Western Canada that will not get seeded this year should this wet weather pattern continue. This will have long-term effects on both the grain and livestock industries. Our first priority therefore must be to address the current crop insurance parameters and adapt it accordingly in order to encourage farmers to seed cereal crops which could still be harvested for feed."

MCPA recommends the current deadline for the crop insurance program be extended. An extension to the deadline would provide grain farmers or diversified farmers with an extended opportunity to seed their crops. Currently, Western Canada has the lowest seeded barley acres since 1965. By extending the deadline to allow crops to be late seeded, there would be potential revenue/income for grain farmers while also providing a feed source for livestock. The long term benefit to our cattle producers would consequently be in ensuring feed grains and green feed are available for our livestock in the fall, should the current weather conditions hold in Western Canada. If taken advantage of, crop insurance programs will compensate growers for acres taken out of production or acres reseeded, with the current compensation being 50.00 per acre. "This does not cover costs for many," says Mowat. "Our recommendations provide a viable recourse with long term benefits to both industries."

MCPA is therefore making the following recommendations to the province:

- 1) Extend the June 20<sup>th</sup> deadline on cereal crops by 25 days to July 15, 2010.
- 2) Offer a percentage of crop insurance coverage for late seeded crops to encourage late planting. (Late seeded crops should be evaluated separately from producers' crops seeded prior to the June 20<sup>th</sup> deadline.)
- 3) Maintain the current \$50.00 per acre compensation for excess moisture.

Further benefits, should the crops be seeded to cereals, include the minimizing of nutrient run off from our soils.

“We need to prepare for an impending crisis that could affect both sectors of agriculture,” says Mowat. “With another wet year, some areas in our province are facing a fourth year of flooding. That said, we know we can’t predict the weather, so until such time as it is clear what we are ultimately dealing with, we have a fiduciary responsibility to think strategically, exercise our industry acumen, and deal with this future uncertainty with a measure of prudence now – and we’ll certainly continue to actively pursue further options for our cattle producers.”

*The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association is the exclusive voice of the cattle industry in Manitoba through communication, advocacy, research and education within industry and to government, consumers and others, to improve prosperity and ensure a sustainable future. The Association represents 10,000 cattle producers across the province.*

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