



NEWS RELEASE

MCPA Echoes Urgent Need for Aid/Program Assistance at Provincial Meeting

August 20, 2010 (WINNIPEG, MB) – The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association continues ongoing dialogue with the Province of Manitoba, recently meeting with Manitoba’s Agriculture Minister on Tuesday, August 17, 2010. “Our meeting once again afforded us the opportunity to formally communicate the immense challenges facing our province’s cattle producers and the great need for provincial aid,” said Jay Fox, President of MCPA. “We have outlined the business case, along with the short and long term benefits to the programs we have developed and put forth, and are encouraged by the Province’s commitment to make an announcement by the end of this month. We trust this will include a positive agenda for action moving forward.” According to Fox, the excess moisture issues in the province has devastated approximately 1/3 of the provinces beef producers, but has optimism that should government act swiftly, affected producers would have the opportunity to stabilize rather than fold. “Should we collaboratively embrace the programs for which we have lobbied and act quickly within this urgent window of opportunity, we can ensure a measure of stability moving forward.”

MCPA’s General Manager, Sheila Mowat, reiterated that aid is desperately needed and cannot be delayed. “We must act now, with a clear vision for the future, in order to have a future,” said Mowat. “We need to agree on and implement short term program solutions now, but must also receive commitment to create mechanisms that enable us to prepare longer term. The implementation of these detailed program solutions as we have developed them and put forth, are fundamental to the industry moving forward,” Mowat said. “Of course effective programming implementation requires collaboration and joint commitment to program success. We therefore greatly look forward to working with the Province in this regard, in order to ensure our industry’s sustainability and future strength.”

The long term program solutions that have been put forward are inspired by a vision that goes beyond the immediate and urgent response required to address the losses and damage caused by excess moisture, according to Mowat. “Our aim is to act now by launching a number of key initiatives while creating the conditions to tackle the implementation of longer term sustainable programming moving forward, such as the Cattle Insurance and Hay & Pasture Insurance programs.” Among the urgent key initiatives are:

- 1) Per Head Payment for Breeder and Feeder Stock –To help offset the challenges of loss of pasture and hay land.
- 2) Freight Assistance – To help offset the cost of hauling feed from distances in order to obtain enough feed inventory.
- 3) Tax Deferral Option – For producers who have to sell all or part of their livestock due to adverse weather conditions.

The aforementioned programs have been based on sound numbers that would aid in the recovery of a portion of producer costs through a working partnership with the government and the effected producer on the landscape. “In order for our struggling producers to be able to start planning immediately, we strongly encourage the Minister to implement these urgently needed programs swiftly,” said District 6 Director, Trevor Atchison. “While Minister Struthers has acknowledged the necessity of matching ‘feed to the need’, we must insist that an effective freight assistance program also include the funds or assistance to pay for it and be available to all producers affected.” Additionally, MCPA eagerly anticipates working toward the forage restoration program put forth and looks forward to a long term commitment of ensuring both municipal and provincial drains are cleaned out and maintained. According to MCPA, apart from the Freight Assistance program which must be available to all producers, all additional programs would be considered on a case by case and individual basis in order to ensure that all affected producers are eligible, not just those in certain geographical locations.

“The industry needs stability and that can be attained in the level of financial support it receives from the government to weather the current excess moisture crisis,” said Jay Fox. “The programs we have brought forward provide the support required in that they are targeted, relevant and accessible to all producers affected.”

The beef industry in Manitoba is the economic cornerstone in many regions of the Province generating revenues of approximately \$500Million to the provincial economy. “We owe it to our producers today and for the future of the industry to keep working toward the implementation of these programs,” Fox said. “We remain hopeful that our government will help in creating the right conditions for the beef industry in Manitoba to thrive over the long term. The aid received through the implementation of these programs would be a significant measure toward achieving that end.”

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.

-30-

For Further Information Contact:

Major Jay Fox
President, MCPA
Phone: 204.447.0120

Sheila Mowat
General Manager, MCPA
Phone: 204.772.4542