



NEWS RELEASE

"The Voice of Manitoba Farmers"
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Farmers Facing Disastrous Flood Situation

Winnipeg – Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) is working on behalf of Manitoba farmers on the issues surrounding the controlled release of water along the Assiniboine River and stresses that there will be a profound impact on surrounding farms and communities.

A major concern is the maximum amount of \$200,000 per claim through Disaster Financial Assistance. As well, maximum eligible costs that can be claimed to repair land are limited to the pre-disaster value.

"Families will not just lose their farms and residences, they will lose their ability to earn income," said Doug Chorney, KAP President. "These payments do not compensate for lost income and that is why we have asked for 100 per cent compensation for all losses of property and income."

In addition to zero coverage for loss of income, Disaster Financial Assistance is not available for insurable losses, costs recoverable through any other programs, or normal operating costs.

KAP is working with provincial officials to address the effects this release of water will have and we are in communication with Hon. Stan Struthers, Minister of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives on a daily basis regarding flood updates. KAP is voicing farmers' concerns and working with other stakeholders such as commodity groups.

Personal safety, animal welfare and property protection are also major issues as producers in areas facing potential flooding have not had sufficient time to prepare and are now scrambling to get their families and livestock to safety.

"This could easily escalate into a very unsafe situation for people and animals, and at this point many farmers do not have the physical or financial resources to properly "suspend" or move their entire operations," said Chorney.

There is an enormous financial burden on producers who are facing flooding challenges and KAP is calling on the provincial and federal governments to show leadership in moving quickly on compensation.

Farmers affected by flooding should contact the Manitoba Water Stewardship Flood Liaison Office at (204) 945-8373 for information and assistance.

Flooding and other kinds of stress can make life extremely challenging. Farmers and other rural Manitobans can contact the Manitoba Farm & Rural Support Services for information and support during these difficult times. They offer free, confidential telephone and on-line counselling. Call 1-866-367-3276 or visit www.ruralsupport.ca.

For more information, please contact:

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Keystone Agricultural Producers is Manitoba's largest general farm policy organization, representing over 7,000 farm families and 22 commodity groups throughout the province. Our strength is our democratic structure, and our mission is to represent and promote the interests of the province's farm families.