



NEWS RELEASE

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Farmers Will Evaluate Flood Damage and Safety Nets

Winnipeg – Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) is deeply concerned about ongoing damage to thousands of acres of farmland caused by recent downstream overland flooding across southern Manitoba.

The devastating weather conditions have placed significant burdens on producers. Many are now left wondering if agricultural safety net programs will work for their operations.

"The producers I talked with are questioning the effectiveness of AgriStability and crop insurance," said Ian Wishart, KAP President. "It's clear we'll have a large amount of crop loss acres and we need a program to cover those."

This week Wishart met with producers and toured areas which were hit hard by overland flooding. The loss producers have experienced is difficult to measure at this point as the damage covers a wide area, but it will be in the millions of dollars.

"This situation is going to have a significant impact on farm families and we will have to do what is necessary to help them out," said Wishart. "We will examine what the long-term effects will be and monitor the existing safety net programs to ensure they are adequate."

KAP encourages governments to consider a Cover Crop Protection Program for 2010, similar to the program utilized for the 2005 and 2006 crop years. This type of program allows farmers affected by spring flooding a one-time payment to help them improve and protect flood damaged soil by planting a cover crop.

KAP will monitor the ongoing impact of drain maintenance. The damage caused by recent heavy rains is a warning sign that significant drainage work needs to be done in many areas of the province. KAP calls on the provincial and municipal governments to make drain maintenance a priority.

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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.