



# NEWS RELEASE

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## “The Voice of Manitoba Farmers”

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### **For immediate release**

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## Producers Must Benefit from Innovation Initiatives

**Winnipeg** – Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) welcomes the federal and provincial announcement regarding Innovation Funding under Growing Forward. The \$39 million investment in initiatives related to technology, methods, and new products is much needed in order for agriculture to advance as an industry.

KAP is pleased that both levels of government are working together to encourage innovation in agriculture, but asks that the programs under the Innovation Fund are designed to ensure the maximum benefit goes back to producers.

"We're encouraged that the governments of Canada and Manitoba are moving ahead with Growing Forward, but it's important that producers benefit from the dollars spent to promote the industry," said Ian Wishart, KAP President.

The fund includes an Industry Innovation Suite focused on helping farmers and others develop new products and processes through the Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative (ARDI) and other programs. It also includes a Strategic Innovation Suite which offers a program to help form business alliances to take advantage of opportunities. The suite will also support research at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences and the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI).

While the announcement is another tool in the toolbox for producers, there are challenges facing many sectors of the industry that need immediate attention.

"These programs could provide some excellent opportunities when the rough economic times of some sectors are behind us," said Wishart.

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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.