



COMMENTARY

“The Voice of Manitoba Farmers”

203-1700 Ellice Ave. ~ Winnipeg MB ~ R3H 0B1

ph: (204) 697-1140 ~ fax: (204) 697-1109

kap@kap.mb.ca ~ www.kap.mb.ca

For immediate release

November 24, 2009

Show Me the Money

By Ian Wishart, KAP President - Cell: 856-6964

The work Keystone Agricultural Producers, Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, and Wild Rose Agricultural Producers conducted in 2008 and 2009 on the “farmer’s share” of the consumer dollar that goes back to the farm gate keeps coming up in conversation as it has had several positive results.

The study has helped consumers better understand what the farmer gets from their food dollar. Also, looking at some of the numbers regarding the share producers receive on red meats—around 22 per cent—and knowing producers are getting substantially less for these commodities these days has raised the question: If the consumer pays more and the farmer gets less, where does the money go?

Our food chains are often long and complicated in these sectors and others, and it is very difficult to determine if they are operating in an efficient manner.

Similar numbers on the farmer’s share are hard to find for other jurisdictions such as Brazil and Australia, and they are often difficult to compare. But it seems that the percentage of the consumer dollar producers in those countries get may be substantially higher. Clearly, every producer would like to know the answers as we all prefer to get our returns from the marketplace.

Also, the federal government has been funding “value chain roundtables” in many sectors for about five years. Maybe it’s time to hear more from the groups involved about problems and opportunities in these sectors.

Taking a look at tracking and tracing through value chains, if we as producers go to the trouble of participating in full tracking and tracing for our food products right through to the consumer, we are probably going to want to track the dollars as well!

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.