



NEWS RELEASE

“The Voice of Manitoba Farmers”

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Support for Hog Producers Welcomed

Winnipeg – Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) would like to thank Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz for putting together a series of programs to help the hog industry transition towards the future. KAP is eager to receive detailed information on the programs which were announced by the government on August 15.

“The sooner the money is in farmers’ hands, the better,” said Ian Wishart, KAP President. “Hog producers are in a desperate situation.”

KAP thanks the federal government for consulting with the Canadian Pork Council and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture on support for hog producers.

KAP believes the short-term loans mentioned in the announcement will be appreciated by producers as there is a pressing need for funds to cover feed costs and other essentials. The focus on marketing is also an important step forward. Though the details are yet to be announced, the retirement section of the federal support is expected to be helpful for a number of hog producers who have determined that they might want to exit the industry.

The federal initiatives include:

- A \$17 million International Pork Marketing Fund that will focus on seeking new markets for Canadian pork through research and promotion.
- Long-term loans to help producers with viable hog operations to restructure their businesses, and short-term loans to help cover operating costs.
- Up to \$75 million in funding through a Hog Farm Transition Program which will assist producers who decide to transition out of the hog industry.

KAP welcomes the new initiatives to support hog producers, and hopes the restructuring plan will work for the Manitoba situation.

“Hog producers are in a dire situation and a lot of people have used up all of their equity, so they're borrowing money to feed their livestock and not covering their feed costs,” said Wishart. “They can't stop what they're doing because they've got to keep the cash flow coming—even though it's not enough to cover expenses. It's a bad situation all around.”

Details on the federal support are expected to be announced in the coming weeks. Producers are encouraged to contact the KAP office at 697-1140 if they require more information or other assistance.

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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.