



COMMENTARY

“The Voice of Manitoba Farmers”

1-1313 Border St. ~ Winnipeg MB ~ R3H 0X4

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

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

Time to Move on Nutrient Management Regulation

June 8, 2007

By David Rolfe, KAP President. Cell: (204) 483-0502.

We're reaching the half-way point of 2007, and Manitoba's farmers are still no closer to knowing what's happening with the proposed nutrient management regulation for this province. Keystone Agricultural Producers led negotiations with the provincial government that ended in a draft regulation that was fair and workable for farmers, and could also help to decrease agriculture's impact on nutrient levels.

Government then asked for public comment on the regulation, and KAP encouraged farmers to get involved with the process. We've also highlighted how critical it will be for this new regulation to be implemented with a targeted and adequately funded incentive program that will help farm families to come in-line with the new requirements.

In November, the livestock industry was put into turmoil. The government announced a halt on development in the hog industry and put that issue to the Clean Environment Commission for review – along with the proposed nutrient management regulation. For the last six months, farmers have been in limbo.

The provincial government has briefly returned to the Legislature after the election to tie up loose ends before their summer break. The nutrient management regulation and incentive package is one huge loose end, particularly for farm families. We want to know what rules we will be working under, and what programs will be available to smooth out the transition period. There is no reason that the regulation has to be tied to the eventual report from the Clean Environment Commission on the hog industry – in fact, it's a completely separate issue.

It's time to take a step forward. Farmers have negotiated with government in good faith to develop a regulation and incentive package that is fair and workable for everyone. Farmers will commit to nutrient management, but we need to know that government is also supportive of a plan that will be realistic at the farm level.