



NEWS RELEASE

“The Voice of Manitoba Farmers”

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For immediate release

July 3, 2007

Unionization of Farm Workers

Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) President David Rolfe has issued the following statement in response to the decision of the Manitoba Labour Board to certify a group of migrant workers on a farm near Portage la Prairie:

“KAP has a number of very serious concerns about the process that has led to the creation of the first union for migrant workers in Manitoba. There are reports that a language barrier may have led to the workers not being aware of their rights, or what they were agreeing to.

We believe that the federal programs that oversee the migrant workers’ contracts ensure a high standard for working conditions and wages for the employees. While the issue may remain in the legal system for a while before reaching an ultimate conclusion, KAP is very concerned about the implications for other agricultural employers in Manitoba.

Farmers in Manitoba already deal with a competitive employment environment and must offer wages and benefits that are consistent with other industries, in order to attract workers. Unionization adds new costs for farm businesses that already work under tight margins in a very competitive marketplace. The push to unionization could ultimately force farm enterprises to either limit their number of employees or go out of business.

We’ll be working very closely with our members and member organizations to follow this issue and provide support wherever possible.”

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