Saving Lake Winnipeg

– A letter of concern from the business community

Did you know?

- Agriculture produces almost 12% of Manitoba's GDP ($4.1 billion) and employs 62,000 people.
- The pork sector alone employs 11,000 people and generates revenue of about $1 billion. This means more than 3,000 jobs in Winnipeg.
- The pork processing sector makes up about one third of the entire food processing industry in Manitoba and is about 9% of all manufacturing in the province – exceeding aerospace and transportation manufacturing combined.
- Pork processing plants in Manitoba export pork and pork products to more than 30 countries around the world.

To the Citizens of Manitoba,

Did you know the provincial government recently passed legislation banning all new hog barns and expansions in every corner of Manitoba, no matter how small the farm?

The government claimed to pass this legislation to reduce phosphorus contamination in Lake Winnipeg. It was done without any consultation with hog producers and other stakeholders, even though we represent thousands of farms and families across our province. This simplistic ban puts thousands of jobs at risk, without dealing with the real problem.

The Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board determined the following list of phosphorus contributors.

Here are the facts:

- 53% from outside the province (including the US);
- 17% from natural and undefined sources (e.g. septic fields);
- 15% from agriculture (of which hog production contributes less than 1.5%);
- 9% from municipal wastewater; and
- 6% from the atmosphere.

As business leaders who represent many employers in the province, we believe banning or severely restricting one sector is the wrong approach to solve the problem.

One of the principal cures for the lake is better water management, as more than half the phosphorus is due to spring runoff. Better water management will also assist in drought years and help reduce flooding, which we have seen wreak havoc in much of Manitoba this year.

We ask Manitobans to support us in urging the government to work co-operatively with the farm and business communities as well as other stakeholders to help solve Lake Winnipeg's problems, instead of penalizing the farmers who grow our food.

Michael McCain, *President*
Maple Leaf Foods

Don Janzen, *President*
HyLife Foods

Dr. Brad Chappell, DVM
Swine Health Professionals Ltd.

Graham Starmer, *President*
Manitoba Chambers of Commerce

Darrell Roskos, *Chair*
Animal Nutrition Association of Canada (Manitoba Division)

Karl Kynoch, *Chairman*
Manitoba Pork Council

Lorne Funk
Funk's Livestock Transport Ltd.

Ron Friesen, *Vice-President*
East-Man Feeds

Steve Brandt
Steve's Livestock Transport

Bill Gardner, *Chair*
Manitoba Employers Council

The Manitoba Employers Council (MEC), established in 1980, is the largest collective of individual employers and employer associations in Manitoba. MEC represents the interests of Manitoba employers in matters relating to employment, including: labour relations, human resource management, employment standards, and workers compensation and workplace safety and health.

Members

Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors
Canadian Federation of Independent Business
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Mining Association of Manitoba (The)
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Winnipeg Construction Association (The)
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

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