

MANITOBA BEEF PRODUCERS

P. (204) 772-4542 220-530 Century Street
(800) 772-0458 Winnipeg, MB R3H 0Y4
F. (204) 774-3264 www.mbbeef.ca



NEWS RELEASE

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STRATEGIES NEEDED TO HELP BEEF PRODUCERS DEAL WITH FLOODING AND EXCESS MOISTURE

WINNIPEG – Manitoba Beef Producers (MBP) is seeking short and long-term strategies to help beef producers deal with the effects of the flooding and excess moisture conditions.

“Water-related issues are continuing to evolve and a variety of strategies are needed to help producers face these challenges,” said Heinz Reimer, MBP president. “First, MBP is strongly stressing the importance of timely information sharing so beef producers can make informed management decisions as this large volume of water moves through the province. It is critical to have the information and management tools readily available; that is a key lesson coming from the recent floods.”

Reimer said producers in flood-affected areas need regular updates on flow volumes, predicted levels, inundation zones and the projected duration of excess water. MBP has been reinforcing with provincial officials the need to use multiple communications platforms to get this information to producers, be that via news releases, social media, direct producer contact or other means.

Pasture and hay lands have been damaged by flooding and excess moisture, with losses projected to mount. MBP has also requested updated pasture, hay and transportation listings should producers need to source feed or relocate cattle in the days and weeks ahead.

“Given these challenging conditions, MBP is very concerned about potential hay and feed shortages,” said Reimer. “After two difficult winters, available hay and straw supplies have been reduced. Green feed production could be limited. There are alternatives that could be explored, such as allowing beef producers to access crops that may be written off due to the adverse weather.”

Depending on what transpires, it may also be necessary to pursue transportation assistance for hay and straw, and to move cattle. Another option may be the livestock tax deferral.

MBP stresses the financial and general impact of the flooding and excess moisture conditions will be devastating for producers, especially considering that many farms have yet to return to normal operational and environmental conditions following the 2011 flood.

“In consultation with producers, we are examining what may be needed beyond the existing business risk management programs,” said Reimer. “MBP will continue to work with the provincial and federal governments on effective strategies to move through and beyond these challenging conditions.”

Reimer cautioned that disasters such as the flood situation can lead to a further contraction of Manitoba’s beef industry, instead of the expansion that should be happening. This will have long-term impacts on the viability of the livestock industry and associated businesses and rural communities in Manitoba.

Manitoba Beef Producers is the exclusive voice of the beef industry in Manitoba. Our role and mission is to represent our beef producers through communication, research, advocacy and education. Manitoba Beef Producers represents 8,000 beef producers across the province.

For more information, please contact:

Melinda German, General Manager
Office: 204-772-4542 Cell: 204-981-1458