

January 15, 2020

Hon. Cliff Cullen  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
minjus@leg.gov.mb.ca

Hon. Blaine Pedersen  
Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development  
minagr@leg.gov.mb.ca

Ministers:

**RE: Trespassing and enforcement in Manitoba**

The signatories to this letter are writing to request that the Manitoba government consider undertaking legislative and regulatory changes and other initiatives aimed at enhancing the protection of livestock operations from illegal activities such as trespassing.

Agriculture is an important contributor to Manitoba's economy. In 2017 the primary agriculture sector represented 4.3% of Manitoba's GDP, while the food and beverage manufacturing sector represented 2.0%. Livestock production, which makes up approximately 35% of provincial farm cash receipts, is a critical component of the agriculture industry and according to Manitoba Economic Statistics, 2013-2017, in one year it can generate over \$2 billion in farm cash receipts.

The Manitoba government's objective is to increase the contribution of the livestock sector even further through the Manitoba Protein Advantage by increased investments in primary production and processing. The goal is a 35% increase in animal protein production by 2025 (from a 2017 baseline) as well as a 35% increase in animal protein processing.

Recent events across Canada, wherein special interest groups have illegally entered farmyards, barns and on-farm enclosures for the purposes of protesting animal agriculture and livestock production, have sparked concern from Manitoba's livestock producers. Farmers respect an individual's right to legal protest, and freedom of expression and speech. However, the tactics of some animal activist groups involve intimidation, harassment, trespassing, breaking and entering, and interrupting farming businesses, which are unlawful activities.

Trespassing on farmland and in farm buildings is a serious safety concern for farmers. Barns and livestock enclosures are often close to where farm families live, and with neighbours often far away, farmers can be quite isolated and feel vulnerable. There are also significant concerns for the safety and health of livestock and the biosecurity of the operation.

KAP members have provided direction to engage with the Manitoba government on regulatory and enforcement solutions to this issue. KAP members request that the government of Manitoba enhance and fully enforce laws around intimidation, trespass, break and enter and mischief towards farms.

Legislation intended to improve protections for farm operations has been brought forward in Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan and includes increased penalties for trespassing, requirements for explicit consent to access livestock enclosures, protection for property owners from civil liabilities, specific provisions for trespassing on agricultural property, and extension of protections to livestock processing facilities.

Actions taken by other provinces to improve enforcement of new legislation include the appointment of a dedicated Crown prosecutor for agricultural offenses, and education and awareness sessions that connect agricultural leaders and enforcement agencies to help those who enforce the laws to better understand how serious the impacts are of protests on livestock producers, their families and their employees, as well as the livestock.

Some immediate actions KAP would like the Manitoba government to consider include amendments to the Petty Trespass Act and the Animal Diseases Act to increase penalties for trespassing. KAP also requests legislation be developed specifically to address the issue of consent and informed access to farmland and farm buildings. Members would like to see more education and awareness available for farmers, rural residents and law enforcement so there is an understanding of how trespassing laws are applied in Manitoba, what residents can expect from law enforcement (and what police and RCMP can expect on-farm), and what the expectations are regarding an individual's right to protection of property.

Members would also like to discuss the allocation of resources to the crime reduction teams announced on November 26, 2019, to explore this as part of the enforcement solution to this issue.

We would like to schedule a meeting to further highlight our members' concerns and discuss next steps. We will be in touch with your office to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,



Bill Campbell  
President  
Keystone Agricultural Producers



David Wiens  
Chair  
Dairy Farmers of Manitoba



Robert Johnson  
President  
Manitoba Bison Association



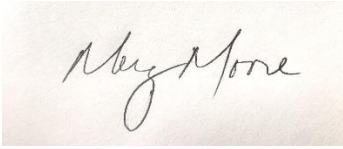
Jake Wiebe  
Chair  
Manitoba Chicken Producers



Harold Froese  
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Manitoba Egg Farmers



George Matheson  
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Morgan Moore  
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