KEYSTONE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

July 28, 2026

Rural Crime

Dear Minister Wiebe:

Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) is Manitoba's general farm policy organization, providing a unified voice for farmers on issues that affect agriculture. KAP represents and promotes the interests of all Manitoba farmers and 18 commodity associations. We are writing to express concerns about rural property crime.

Farmers have become increasingly vocal about community safety—and for good reason. Crime statistics show that some rural Manitoba areas have higher crime rates than urban centers. Property crime represents a significant issue. E.g., snowmobiles, ATVs, tools, trucks, GPS systems, and copper wire are ideal on-farm targets for theft. Thefts of copper wire or GPS systems have not only created farmer frustration but also delays due to essential farm parts needing to be replaced.

Farmers live in rural areas and have increased vulnerability due to their remoteness and delayed emergency response times. While farmers have adopted proactive approaches in deterring rural crime (e.g., installing locks, video cameras, gates, and security systems), government plays a critical role in crime prevention and community safety. KAP has two recommendations for government to consider.

(1) Implement a scrap metal license. Because metal theft remains an ongoing concern, KAP recommends additional amendments to the Scrap Metal Act. Jurisdictions such as California and Minnesota have introduced scrap metal seller licenses that require anyone selling scrap to have a valid license. Exemptions do exist (e.g., plumbers and electricians), and creating a license would add another deterrence for metal theft.

(2) Expand Crisis Response Units. Introducing a crisis response unit in Brandon has created positive change, and similar approaches should be expanded throughout Manitoba. This forward-thinking approach means using the most appropriate resources for an emergency all while ensuring police maintain their core duties.

Addressing rural crime requires a collaborative approach, and we look forward to working with your department on this important issue. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Colin Hornby
General Manager, Keystone Agricultural Producers Inc.

CC: Minister Ron Kostyshyn – Department of Agriculture
Minister Bernadette Smith – Department of Housing, Addictions and Homelessness