



Government
of
Saskatchewan

Minister of Agriculture
Legislative Building
Regina, Canada S4S 0B3

July 3, 2015

Mr. Chad MacPherson, General Manager
SK Stock Growers Association
PO Box 4752
REGINA SK S4P 3Y4

Dear Mr. MacPherson:

Thank you for your email of June 18, 2015, regarding the resolutions carried at the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association's (SSGA) Annual General Meeting on June 9, 2015. The following responses are included for resolutions pertaining to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Resolution #3

Getting producers to submit samples for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) testing in Saskatchewan continues to be an issue. It is up to industry whether or not the industry chooses to pursue producer-funded incentives to promote BSE testing and the Ministry respects any decision industry makes in this regard. We do encourage industry to continue exploring options for encouraging producers to submit samples for testing under the national BSE surveillance program.

Resolution #5

The Ministry of Agriculture is currently working with the Ministry of Environment, the lead provincial agency on species at risk, to develop Saskatchewan's position on the proposed listing. In developing this joint position, the Ministry of Agriculture is consulting with agricultural stakeholders, including the SSGA, to ensure stakeholder concerns receive full consideration.

Resolution #8

The Ministry agrees that Saskatchewan producers need to retain adequate access to veterinary drugs. We encourage industry to communicate their needs to Health Canada, the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association to ensure that their concerns are taken into consideration in Veterinary Drug Directorate's decisions with respect to regulatory changes that will impact how producers and their veterinarians can access these important medications.

Resolution #9

The Ministry of Agriculture is aware of, and also concerned about, the low number of Saskatchewan submissions for BSE analysis. Provincially inspected abattoirs regulated under The Meat Inspection (Saskatchewan) Regulations submit BSE tissue samples when appropriate, although such submissions are very rare. Healthy slaughter animals, or animals entering the food chain, are not eligible for submission under the federal BSE surveillance program.

Resolution #11

In regard to the transition of the federal pastures to provincial administration, the Ministry of Agriculture aimed to be as consistent as possible with the lease terms and conditions in place with the current agricultural lessees. Due to the unique nature of this undertaking, we recognized the need for special provisions. We took a balanced approach where the transitioned pastures received some benefits that other grazing lessees do not have, while there are also some unique requirements.

The "hunting clause" is unique to the transitioned federal pastures and was put in place due to the historic use of the pastures for hunting. The need to maintain access for hunting during the licensed game seasons is unique to these leases. Hunting will not be permitted while normal pasture operations are underway. Any other user of these lands must receive consent of the lessee. Another significant provision provided to the patrons of the transitioned pasture was the option to use the infrastructure on the pastures at no cost, provided the infrastructure was maintained. Every other agricultural lessee must purchase the improvements on the leased land.

The requirement for a grazing report to be completed annually is an important range management tool. Grazing Co-operatives are also required to provide similar type reporting.

Resolution #12

The Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP) was developed as a pilot with a collaborative delivery model. The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) provides producers with support and service for using the risk management tool, while Alberta's Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) is responsible for the technical components, ensuring the web based platform for policy purchases is operating and calculating the premiums, coverages and settlements that the insurance is based on.

To provide access to this program in 2014 some features, such as payment on account, were not able to be incorporated in time for the program's launch. The program delivery model will be evaluated at the end of the pilot in 2018 and enhancements, such as a payment on account, will be reviewed. In the interim, producers can pay their account online with a credit card or by cheque if they do not have internet access.

Resolution #13

As was indicated in your resolution, drainage is a sensitive issue as it can affect downstream neighbours, municipalities and other jurisdictions. Those engaged in drainage projects need to ensure that any drainage projects follow specific design and operation standards and rules. The Water Security Agency (WSA) has launched a major initiative to overhaul drainage legislation and regulations. With these pending initiatives by the WSA, the Ministry of Agriculture has no plans to link drainage violations with business risk management programs.

Resolution #14

As negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement progress, our Government remains committed to advancing new opportunities for Saskatchewan's agriculture industry. We recognize the importance of strengthening market access in the Asia-Pacific region and will continue to press the federal government to have a high level of ambition and flexibility to successfully conclude this agreement.

Resolution #15

The Ministries of Environment and Agriculture are working together to implement a plan to improve the control of feral wild boar. This plan does include regulatory and non-regulatory actions. This will be in addition to the two ongoing programs, which are funded through Growing Forward 2 and administered by the SCIC:

1. The Feral Wild Boar Control Program – Qualified control teams work with rural municipalities and landowners to investigate sightings and take appropriate action to deal with feral wild boar; and,
2. The Wildlife Damage Compensation Program – Provides compensation for crop and/or feed damage caused by feral wild boar.

We would appreciate if the SSGA would assist the government's efforts by encouraging your members to report wild boar sightings and possible crop and/or forage damage to the SCIC local offices.

Resolution #21

Predation Compensation is part of the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. Producers can receive up to 80 per cent of the animal's value to cover veterinary costs in the event their livestock are injured from a predator attack. Full compensation for the value of the livestock is provided if the animal is killed as a result of a confirmed predator attack.

Since the predation compensation feature was implemented in 2010, SCIC has provided approximately \$7.3 million in predation compensation on over 11,000 claims from producers. Of those claims approximately 250 have been for injured animals. By providing compensation for the veterinary costs of injured livestock, SCIC is able to support producers as they bring their animal back to good health.

Resolution #22

The CFIA is proposing to amend the Health of Animals Regulations to include tracing livestock movement. The SSGA participated in a meeting organized by the Ministry of Agriculture on June 24, 2015, between Saskatchewan livestock associations and the CFIA to discuss the proposed changes. The SSGA is encouraged to provide written feedback to the CFIA as soon as possible.

Mr. Chad MacPherson

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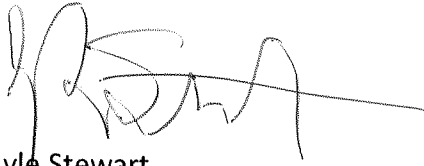
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Resolutions #2, #4, #6, #7 and #10

The Ministry of Agriculture has forwarded these resolutions to the Ministry of Environment for their response.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lyle Stewart', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture

cc: Honourable Herb Cox, Minister of Environment