



# **SASKATCHEWAN STOCK GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

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## **Media Release**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Saskatchewan Stock Growers' President Welcomes Provincial Dollars – and Calls on the Federal Government to Step up to the Plate.**

Ed Bothner, President of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, said today that, "Saskatchewan's cow-calf producers appreciate the efforts being made by Agriculture Minister Bob Bjornerud and the provincial government to get badly needed financial assistance into the pockets of producers."

"We are also pleased that the province has made the assistance available through a streamlined process that limits unnecessary bureaucracy", added Bothner.

"While the assistance from the province is appreciated, it falls far short of meeting the needs of many producers," said Bothner, "it is critical that the federal government step up to the plate and provide the 60% matching contribution which is the well-established precedent in these sorts of situations."

"The provincial government has recognized the challenges producers face in the wake of a series of economic problems that date back to 2003 and the beginning of the BSE crisis," said Bothner, "just as our BSE issues were coming to a resolution, we were confronted by a jump in the value of the Canadian dollar, which impacted export trade, followed by an unprecedented rise in the cost of feed grains." Bothner went on to say, "This new program is not a solution to our problems, the solution comes only from reinstating our markets to pre-2003 conditions. Some of the work on market conditions has been and is being done but the situation requires even more work."

"We've also been confronted by yet another costly trade barrier, Country of Origin Labeling, which is damaging our ability to access our largest export market—the US", added Bothner.

Bothner qualified his remarks by stating, "It is unfortunate that even if the federal government lives up to its responsibility, the assistance will not meet the real needs of some producers. And, for others, the assistance is already too late in coming."

Bothner pointed to recently released Statistics Canada figures that indicate there has been a loss of 700 cattle producers in Saskatchewan over the past year. This is a number which

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Bothner and other industry observers believe actually under represents the true scope of the problem and the hardship being faced by families and rural communities.

Saskatchewan's cattle producers were alarmed and disappointed by the failure of the federal government to providing meaningful assistance to their industry in the January budget. Many cattle producers were amazed to learn Ontario's auto industry was receiving massive government support while their industry had been ignored.

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