

News from

Manitoba Cattle Enhancement Council
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For Immediate Release

Manitoba beef industry needs new solutions U.S. border reopening is welcome, but doesn't solve old problems

Winnipeg, September 25, 2007 – When the U.S. border fully re-opens to Canadian beef exports this fall it will be a welcome relief to beleaguered cattle producers, but it doesn't solve the major issues facing Manitoba's beef industry, says Bill Uruski, chair of the Manitoba Cattle Enhancement Council.

"It's great that we will soon be able ship our older animals to the U.S. again, but we're still in the exact same position we were four years ago when the BSE crisis hit," said Uruski. "We have little capacity to slaughter and process animals right here in Manitoba and that needs to change."

The MCEC was created in 2006 by the provincial government to support made-in-Manitoba solutions for a long-term, viable beef industry in Manitoba. The council administers an investment pool that is funded by a \$2 per head levy on all cattle sold by Manitoba producers. The province is matching the levy for the first three years so every \$2 becomes \$4. The council's goal is to invest in initiatives that will lead to increased slaughtering and processing capacity, or that will enhance the market for value-added livestock products.

"We are working with producers and stakeholders in the value chain to encourage conditions and plans that over time can lead to a thriving market," said Kathleen (Kate) Butler, MCEC's executive director. "It will be difficult to do and it will take some time, but we need to take these steps today so that we have a vibrant industry tomorrow."

"We are currently reviewing several proposals that all aim to expand the market for Manitoba beef," said Butler. "We're also still actively encouraging others – producers and industry stakeholders – to contact us if they have a proposal that we should be considering for seed capital from MCEC."

For more information on the council, please visit www.mancec.com.

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