



Calvin Vaags, of Plains Processors.

## Conditional funding for Plains Processors

In its continued efforts to address the deficit in slaughter and processing capacity in the province, the Manitoba Cattle Enhancement Council (MCEC) has conditionally approved an application for \$920,000 by Plains Processors, a beef processing plant in Carman, Manitoba.

The investment is expected to help transform the provincially-licensed Plains Processors into a Canadian Food Inspection Agency approved abattoir, giving it the ability to reach new markets including other provinces and national grocery chains.

Plains Processors is one part of a family of companies that includes a farm and feedlot outside of Winnipeg and a two-store retail meat operation in the city.

Currently, the plant processes 80 head per week. The expansion, if it proceeds, will add a new building to connect to the existing facility in its upgrade to federally inspected status. MCEC has appointed a dedicated team to work directly with Plains. Key next steps include obtaining critical environmental approvals as well as finalization of all plans and funding such as a conditional loan of \$2.8 million from the federal Slaughter Improvement Program.

## Country Meat & Sausage receives conditional funding

The Manitoba Cattle Enhancement Council (MCEC) has outlined terms for an offer of conditional approval of an investment of up to \$565,000 into one of Manitoba's best known and longest established abattoirs Country Meat & Sausage (CM&S).

The investment will help CM&S upgrade its facilities to produce new beef products that conform to Canadian Food Inspection Agency standards, allowing it to expand its business in several ways including new ready-to-eat products in new markets.

Established in the mid-1950s, CM&S is a vertically integrated food processor of beef and pork products through its own retail delis as well as through local meat shops, independent grocers and other food service outlets.

The company also expects to use its new beef line in conjunction with its continuing hog slaughtering and plans to accept a modest but suitable number cattle per week of anywhere between 25 and 300 head.

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opinion between their 'expert' consultants and our management team but repeatedly refused to meet with management to clarify these essential matters. We continue to trust that the real experts are those who have proven they can do it in the real world.

Regardless of how MCEC and the management team were treated, it is cattle producers who are our focus. With no federally-inspected beef slaughter capacity in Manitoba, producers are dependent on shipping outside the province. Given the oligopoly in beef slaughter, we also remain largely trapped in a commodity model. The federal government has failed to assist in protecting against another crisis like BSE in 2003 and failed to participate in growth in the Manitoba beef industry.

We stand by the management team and their business plan. Many in the private sector have encouraged us to carry on, and we are grateful for their support. We also remain hopeful that the federal government will find an opportunity in the future to assist this vital project. We can't let up now.

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