



April 28, 2009

New legislation brings choice to agricultural producers

Edmonton... New proposed legislation will bring consistent regulation to agricultural commodity commissions and provide more choice to producers.

Bill 43, *The Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2009*, was tabled in the Alberta Legislature April 28. It provides a consistent refund process to commissions that collect service charges from producers but do not set prices or function as marketing boards. The proposed amendments will require commissions to grant their members the option to seek refunds of mandatory service charges, commonly known as check-offs. These fees are collected whenever an agricultural commodity is sold or acted upon as specified in the regulations.

The proposed change will apply to the commodities of: beef, pork, lamb and potatoes. These currently exist as non-refundable, where producers are obligated to pay a service charge, but do not have the choice to request a refund.

“It is important to have consistent legislation. This ensures producers all have the same fundamental right to choose how their hard-earned money is spent,” said George Groeneveld, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. “If they feel their organization has not met their needs or provided value, they can ask for a refund. It is all about choice.”

These four commissions are among the 20 agricultural boards and commissions currently operating in Alberta under this legislation. Producers of nine commissions already have the choice to request a refund: barley, bison, canola, pulses, soft wheat, winter wheat, elk, bees and forage seeds. The remaining seven are either marketing boards that operate under a supply-managed system, or contract negotiating boards with authority to set the price to be paid to producers for their product. They include chicken, eggs, hatching eggs, turkey, dairy, sugar beets and processed vegetables.

If passed, the amendments are expected to be phased-in for each commission at the start of their 2010 - 2011 fiscal year, giving the commodity groups time to make administrative changes and respond to their members' wishes.

-30-

Backgrounder: Industry Statistics

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Ag Media Line
780-422-1005

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

April 28, 2009

Beef, pork, lamb and potato industry statistics

The changes proposed under Bill 43, *The Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2009*, would apply to beef, pork, lamb and potato producers and their respective industry commissions.

Alberta industry statistics (2008)

Farm cash receipts from cattle sales -- \$3 billion
Farm cash receipts from hog sales -- \$398 million
Farm cash receipts from lamb and sheep sales -- \$17 million
Farm cash receipts from potato sales -- \$150 million

Value of beef and live cattle exports -- \$1 billion
Value of pork and live hog exports -- \$342 million
Value of lamb and sheep exports -- \$164,000
Value of potato exports -- \$239 million

Value of red meat manufacturing -- \$4 billion

Size of the industry in Alberta

5.4 million cattle and calves
1.6 million hogs
127,000 sheep and lambs
54,750 acres of potatoes

28,750 farms produce cattle and calves
2,180 farms produce lamb and sheep
1,570 farms produce hogs
400 farms grow potatoes

-30-

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Ag Media Line
780-422-1005

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

[Alberta Government](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Ministries Listing](#) | [Agriculture and Rural Development Home Page](#) | [News Releases](#) | [Top of Page](#) |

[Send us your comments or questions](#)

Copyright(©) 2009 Government of Alberta