

Good afternoon members of the Clean Environment Commission Panel and ladies and gentleman of the audience.

My name is George Wipf. I'm from the Souris River Colony at Elgin MB. We farm approx 6000 acres of land, with a 900 sow , farrow to finish operation . Also included in Livestock is a beef and diary cows operation. The hog operation is a multiplier operation, with half pure bred and half f1 sows. It is a high health unit. About 1\3 of the animals are sold as breeding stock. In order to sell breeding stock we have to maintain a disease free environment . The operation uses a on site manure separator and a holding lagoon for the liquids.

The operation is a considered a large animal unit and falls under the large animals unit guidelines . Four years ago we built a lagoon for a liquid holding tank. We filed a plan with the local RM and Manitoba Conservation. We got engineered plans and a licensed contractor to dig the lagoon. When we put the plans in place for a manure separator , Manitoba conservation approved the plans.

All large animals units fall under the Manitoba Livestock Mortalities and Manure Management Regulations, and are required to file a manure management plan . Souris River Colony hires independent third parties to do the soil testing. The Colony uses professional agrologist and certified crop advisors, who have successfully completed an acceptable nutrient management course. We soil test all our land in fall of every year, using GPS locators and the services of A& L soil services. The manure get spread both in spring and in fall..We spread the dry manure on crop land in summer time, and irrigate the liquids with a pivot system in accordance to soil requirements. Usually we do not put on any other fertilizer on the land that we apply manure on.

The manure from the dairy is pumped into the same system and is handled in the same manner. All dry manure is summer applied with manure spreaders.

Our colony has been Complying with all Federal and Provincial regulations and it costs us more than \$ 5000.00 annually. That is to cover the costs of soil and water testing and for professional services. In view of the level of importance that is being placed on this data collection and the potential usefulness of this data for provincial reporting on our environmental health, I would strongly recommend that the government bear the costs of these tests.

Hutterite people are considered as long term land holders. In order to own any thing long term a person has to take care of it. We pride our selves ( as do most farmers) as excellent stewards of the land. It is my wish to hand down my farm to the younger generation so the onus is on me to take care of my soil to the best of our capacities

All market hogs go to a Maple Leaf in Brandon. In order to sell to Maple Leaf and in order to keep our multiplier status we had to become HACCP certified . Which means that the barns has to be checked by federal and provincial veterinaries twice a year. Also all drugs must be purchased via prescription and a log must be kept which animals got which drug. It is a regulated industry. As a fact the hog industries is the most regulated of all the other industries in the province.

Yet it is safe to say they outside of Quebec, they face the most opposition The naysayer are

relentlessly trying to slow it down or are trying to downsize it. Last year the Provincial Government finally recognized the Manitoba has a serious Brain Drain or that the fact that many of our young people are leaving our provinces for work or to live elsewhere. The Gov of the day gave out tuition incentives ( of which they are to be commended) , yet at the same time they turn around and are trying to shut down one of the few thriving industries that we have left . The Hog industry (according to Statistic Canada) in the province of Manitoba contributed \$1.72 billion or 44.9 percent of total farm cash receipts, making it the most valuable agricultural commodity in MB. Again according to Statistic Canada in 2002, 32,000 people were directly employed in Manitoba's agricultural industry. In addition , it is estimated that 17,000 people were employed in other areas of the provincial economy as a direct result of the agriculture economy. This would bring the total to 49,000 people or 8.7 percent of Manitoba's labor force in 2002. If we take the Statistic Canada's spin of figure of 4:1, then considering a total of 49,000 time 4 is 196,000 people. In 2002 Manitoba had approx 1 million people. So approx. 20 percent of all of Manitobans benefitted from MB 's hog industries.

Manitoba is the largest pig producing and pig exporting province in Canada with close to 30% of the total pig production in 2006. Manitoba pigs are the best in Canada and in fact in the world. Manitoba sows are the best produces in Canada , producing an average of 2.2 tonnes per sow per year as compared to the rest of the Canadian average of 1.7 in 2005. Manitoba hog producers thrive to be the best in the world. Manitoba hogs are recognized as some of the best indexing hogs, the leanest, and the most sought after in the meat and breeding markets. Yes I know that there are those who say that the province of Manitoba is overcrowded with hogs. However, it is a fact that Manitoba has one of the lowest pig densities of all major hog producing provinces, States and Countries.

Hog Producers like all other farmers are facing hard time to. In 2006 the value of pigs produced in Manitoba was 880 million dollars, in 2005 it was over a 1 billion dollars , in 2004 it was 995 million dollars.

The number of Pig farms in 1971 was 14,200, in 2006 it was 1300. It does not take much of a genius to figure out that between 1971 and 2006 over 14,000 jobs were lost in the rural area and millions of dollars gone the rural economy. A devastating loss to near by small towns a villages.

The people of Manitoba had better think very long and very hard before they decided to shut down or even to downsize this very valuable industry. The cattle industry in this province can be used as a very valuable lesson. We have virtually no slaughter capacity left in the province. The recent rebuilding attempts by such groups as Ranchers Choice should tell us that to revitalize an industry after it is destroyed is next to impossible.

I was born on the banks of the Assiniboine River , 20 miles west of Winnipeg. For 23 years of my life I considered Winnipeg my home town. I moved away from the city about 30 years ago. Today when I visit the city I am disappointed at what I see. I remember as a 16 year old taking hogs to Winnipeg, we had a choice where to deliver. The was:

- OK Packers
- Jack Forgan Packers
- Schneiders
- East West Packers

Canada Packers

Swifts

Burns, Winnipeg And Brandon

In Later years Maple Leaf purchased Burns and Schneiders, and today remains to sole packing plant in Winnipeg. Let us not forget that Maple leaf has announced that they will shut down the Winnipeg slaughter line later this year , leaving Winnipeg with no slaughter capacity what so ever. **ZERO**

For those that say a new plant is in the works ,, I can only say “wishful thinking”. The recent announcement by Olywest to withdraw for the first sinking stone. The only other big player in Big Sky. The recent rumors going around the industries are that Big Shy is going to build in Saskatoon. Considering all the opposition the killing plant received in Winnipeg and considering that Big Sky is a Sask. Company with a lot of SASK government money behind it I do not believe that the proposed plant will ever be built. Should Winnipeg’s Slaughter capacity be at zero in year 2009 , I would not be surprised . Let’s look at history. I can still remember there being 3 or 4 beef slaughter plant in Winnipeg 40 years ago. Today : Zero

In the past that I can remember

A bridge building Company ( Dominion Bridge) Gone Today

2 Flour Plants ( Maple Leaf and Oglivie) None Today

Boiler Building ( The boiler we still used to heat our barns. Vulcun Iron Works) None Today

4 beer breweries 1 small one left today

Coop Implements Gone Today

Manitoba Sugar Gone today

These are just 6 that I mentioned, yet there are dozens more. From ship hull building to sewing factory ,jean factories to brick building, Winnipeg used to be the proud owner of many enterprises. Sadly to say there is little mfg left in the City.

It is must also be mentioned that the rest of the province has not fared any better. The number of flour mills in the province at one time was so plentiful that they were hard to count. Today counting them is easy. There’s one left. 40 years ago almost every town had a creamery of cheese making plant. Today about the only one left is Supato Cheese in St. Claude.

Who can argue against the fact that we need more industry in this province. We should all work on making or passing laws that make it easier to develop safer work places in the province. why must we lose some many of our people to the west or the USA?

The Province of Manitoba has openly pointed out the hog industry as a prime target to start cleaning up Manitoba’s Lakes and Rivers. Will some please tell me what is going on! The National Center For Livestock and the Environment from the University of Manitoba, has openly said that only one percent of the phosphorus come from the hog industry, Blaming all the rest on the big Cities and on the Red River bringing it in from the USA.

In a report done by Manitoba Conservation, called “An examination of the Environment Sustain ability of the hog Industry in Manitoba” they quoted that the whole agriculture industry as a whole, consisting of (Beef , Diary, Hogs, Poultry, Bees, Bison, Grain and Oil Seed Growing ,and all Agriculture Crops)contributed only approx 15% of the whole load. Ladies and Gentleman, if we shut down the whole Agriculture Industry today, Tomorrow we would still be left with 85% of the phosphorus load. So I ask again, “Why the Hog Industry? Why is the Hog industry being singled out ?”

I stated before the hog industry is already very heavily regulated. In order to operate a hog operation today one must work and be very familiar with all of the following gov. acts:

The Environment Act.  
The Water Protection Act  
The Water Right Act.  
The Manitoba Livestock Mortalities and Manure Management Regulation  
The Planning Act  
The Farm Practice Protection Act  
The Animal Diseases Act.  
HACCP Program  
Truck Quality Assurance act (For safe animal transportation)

To start or build a large Animal Unit in the Province today , the following have to be involved, at the very least.

Manitoba Pork Council  
Manitoba Water Stewardship  
Manitoba Conservation  
Agriculture and Agri-food Canada  
Local RM  
The office of the Fire Commissioner

Some day we will have to realize that enough restriction are in place already. One of the main problems we face today is that, when we have an agricultural problem, the governments of the day is trying to fix it with people who have little or no agricultural background. I would strongly recommend that these kind of problems should be handled by people with the proper agricultural expertise.

In closing let me remind everybody that agriculture and agriculture alone puts food on our table. Let us not forget that Manitoba's food and beverage processing industry includes the slaughtering and/or processing of red meat and poultry, fruit and vegetables, cereal products, seed, dairy products, vegetable oils, feed and beverages. It is one of the most important manufacturing industries in the province, producing close to \$3.3 billion of goods in 2003, or almost one-quarter of the total manufacturing output in the province.

Let us never forget that the food on our table was produced somewhere on a farm. Please don't forget there are getting to be less and less farms all the time. Let us try to rebuild or revamp some of the abandoned farms so the rural area can be repopulated. Thank-You