

AS I SEE IT.....

Good evening to the Board and Staff, Ladies and Gentlemen. My presentation tonight will be based as I see it: I am a producer of grain and cattle in the RM of Woodworth. My hometown is Kenton. I will be speaking on 2 fronts, the 1st as a producer and the 2nd as a Nutrient Management Planner.

I am a producer with great concern for our environment. I started farming 20 years ago as a 1st generation farmer along with my wife. I grew up on a small dairy farm where my parents sold cream, and their cropping system was ½ summer fallow and ½ crop to produce feed for their cows. I purchased my first land in 1990 after renting for a few years. I have always worked away from the farm and did the farming in the evenings and on weekends. My wife has always worked outside the home as a RN. We have 3 children who I hope someday will have the chance to continue on farming in our footsteps if they should choose to do so. I have always been very keen on anything relating to the environment. I switched to direct seeding in 1994 to a one-pass system to conserve water and reduce soil and water erosion with the benefit of reduced input costs. I have been involved in numerous committees in the past such as the Manitoba Zero Till Farmers Association, Manitoba North Dakota No Till Farmers Association, Soil Council of Canada as a land representative, Upper Assiniboine Conservation District and the Woodworth Conservation Group. I was highly involved in creating the Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Program for Manitoba and from time to time have been asked to view projects and give input for the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council. Our whole focus was on how could we reduce our cost and be good stewards of the land for years to come.

Our farm is located 1 mile straight west of a 2500 sow barn. For us the odor has never been an issue. We have only noticed it a few times over the last 5 years and that is when the humidity was near 100%. The odor is no worse than our cattle feedlot or for that matter the odor from human discharge. It is a known fact that fecal and urine wastes have their own fragrance from any output source. We receive manure from 2 large hog barns on about 2/3 of our land; it has been a blessing in disguise as I have seen ammonia Nitrogen in 1987 at 10 cents per pound rise to 50 cents per pound today. That is a 500% increase in agriculture input costs that we cannot sustain. To translate that into \$ per acre: in 1987 for an average crop that requires 100 pounds of nutrient per acre the cost was \$10.00 per acre. That same crop today would cost you \$50.00 per acre in Nitrogen alone, which is only part of the nutrients required. I calculated a nutrient blend for canola on my farm this year that would cost me \$88.00 per acre. These types of input costs cannot be derived from the market place. We need every bit of help we can get. We have been putting manure on our land for 5 years now as crop requirements; I have seen our yields increase by 10 bushels per acre across all crops on our farm. We save approximately \$40,000.00 in commercial fertilizer on 1000 acres per year. That is a real benefit to us as producers. I have also seen land values increase in our area dramatically; the large hog barn operations have not devalued the land. Without manure on our farm it would be a much different picture financially.

As rural depopulation increases ever so fast, we must have a vision for the future to attract the youth to our communities. These large operations have created some employment for the rural people. Not all youth want to migrate to the cities where crime seems to be a growing concern. We have to keep our vision looking forward to the future for our children and their children to come. We live in a society where only 20% of our incomes goes to food and the rest goes to other expenses, mostly recreation. It is a common fact that we all need to eat to survive.

As a Nutrient Management Planner I have varying degrees of education. I have an Agri-business Degree in agriculture, I have taken several courses to achieve a diploma degree, I have taken the Intense Manure Management Course and am currently working on getting my membership with the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists. Manitoba has the toughest manure management regulations in all of Canada. I am currently doing contract work in Nutrient Management for Elite Swine, New Generation Pork and Genetic Pork out of Quebec. I cover many miles in a week from Killarney to Swan River, from Austin to just over the Saskatchewan border at Maryfield. Manitoba has varying degrees of nutrients that can be applied to the land based on soil type and subclasses set out by Manitoba Conservation. The Canada Land Inventory soils run from class 1 through 7, accompanied by 13 subclasses in this province. There is no manure allowed on class 6 and 7 in Manitoba. All of the allowable nitrogen limits are based on nitrogen rates, which are based on the land productivity. Recently phosphate regulations have been introduced as to where phosphate levels are regulated by the government. I see approximately over 500 soil samples a year and have come across only 2 samples where phosphate regulation would be in place. All limits are on the Manitoba Conservation website where it is publicly available to see. I prepare work order applications to crop recommendations based on the Manitoba Soil Fertility Guide for various crops. All livestock operations with 300 animal units or greater have to file a Manure Management Plan annually before spreading. This has to be registered with Manitoba Conservation, soil tests have to be sent to an accredited lab and sent in. Manure samples are collected and sent to the lab. They run tests for different types of nutrients in the manure. After the spread there is a confirmation sent to Manitoba Conservation where it is kept on file. This tells them the legals of the land it is spread on, the time of year, soil class and subclass, crop grown and total of gallons spread. We have seen vast improvements in application equipment as we move forward. All manure is injected into the soil with an Areaway, knives or a coulter system. Application is done either through tankers or a dragline system, they are both equally effective. Application equipment comes with GPS and gallon meters so the applicator knows how much is applied per acre and where exactly in the field they are to go. I believe, that of all the fecal and urine waste management, be it in the livestock or human sector, the hog industry does a superior job in nutrient application. I have enclosed some examples of how we do manure management planning, work orders, nutrient analysis, soil test, nutrient calculator, fertility guides for crop removal. The producers receive a copy of this and it is kept on file for years to come at Manitoba Conservation.

In closing I would encourage expansion of all livestock in Western Manitoba as we can manage the nutrients. Manitoba has to diversify to keep value added business in our province, as we cannot rail raw products out of our province, which puts us at a competitive disadvantage to the east and west ports. I feel that the hog industry is getting unfairly treated, as this is a very complex issue involving the soils, water and air. We need to adapt to the future, this is our environment. I ask the clean environment commission that you look at all of the advantages that are promoted by the hog industry in employment, taxes, and value added food.

I would like to thank the CEC for this opportunity to speak. Thank-you.