

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

HOG PRODUCTION INDUSTRY REVIEW

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

* * * * *

Held at the Royal Canadian Legion

Killarney, Manitoba

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2007

* * * * *

APPEARANCES:

Clean Environment Commission:

Mr. Terry Sargeant	Chairman
Mr. Edwin Yee	Member
Mr. Wayne Motheral	Member
Ms. Cathy Johnson	Commission Secretary
Mr. Doug Smith	Report Writer

Presentations:	PAGE
Marvin Magwood, Farmer	597
Miriam Nichol, Farmer	608
Gerry Blixhavn, Farmer	628
Dwight King, RM of Killarney	637
Wayne Nichol, Farmer	647
Jeffery Blixhavn, Farmer	658
Byron Johnson, Farmer	667
Tim Hofer, Willowcreek Colony	681
Andy Gross, Mayfair Colony	689
David Stead, RM of Morton	703
Robert Hofer, Wellwood Colony	711
Bill Poetker, Farmer	723

INDEX OF EXHIBITS

NO EXHIBITS MARKED

1 TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2007

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 1:10 P.M.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon. I
4 would like to welcome you all here this afternoon.
5 My name is Terry Sargeant. I'm the Chair of the
6 Clean Environment Commission. I am also the Chair
7 of this panel investigating the environmental
8 sustainability of hog production. With me on the
9 panel are Mr. Edwin Yee and Mr. Wayne Motheral.

10 I have a few opening comments to make
11 before we proceed. We have had about a half a
12 dozen people indicate that they wish to make a
13 presentation this is afternoon, and another five
14 or so for this evening, so we could have a
15 reasonably full day.

16 By way of opening comments, the Clean
17 Environment Commission has been requested by the
18 Minister of Conservation to conduct an
19 investigation into the environmental
20 sustainability of hog production in Manitoba. The
21 Terms of Reference from the Minister direct us to
22 review the current environmental protection
23 measures in place relating to hog production in
24 Manitoba, in order to determine their
25 effectiveness for the purpose of managing the

1 industry in an environmentally sustainable
2 manner.

3 Our investigation is to include a
4 public component to gain advice and feedback from
5 Manitobans. This will be by means of public
6 meetings in the various regions of the province to
7 ensure broad participation from the general public
8 and affected stakeholders.

9 We have also been asked to take into
10 account efforts underway in other jurisdictions to
11 manage hog production there.

12 Further, we are to review the contents
13 of a report prepared by Manitoba Conservation
14 entitled: "An Examination of the Environmental
15 Sustainability of the Hog Industry in Manitoba."
16 At the end of our investigation, we will consider
17 various options and may make recommendations in a
18 report to the Minister on any improvements that
19 may be necessary to provide for the environmental
20 sustainability of hog production.

21 To ensure that our review includes
22 issues of importance to all Manitobans, the panel
23 has undertaken to hold 17 days of meetings in 14
24 communities. These meetings will continue through
25 March and April, with the final public meeting

1 currently scheduled for April 27th in Winnipeg.

2 It is open to any groups or
3 individuals to make a presentation to this panel
4 on issues related to our mandate. For the most
5 part, presentations are to be limited to 15
6 minutes. Exceptions will be made in cases where a
7 presenter needs more time. But, in most cases, we
8 would ask that you speak with us prior to the
9 presentation.

10 Those who make presentations to us
11 will be asked to take an oath promising to tell
12 the truth. Presentations should be relevant to
13 the mandate given to us by the Minister, and to
14 the issues described in the guide to public
15 participation in this review. If a presentation
16 is clearly not relevant, it may be ruled out of
17 order. And, further, if it is clearly repetitive,
18 it may also be ruled out of order.

19 Members of the panel may ask questions
20 of presenters during and after their presentation.
21 There will be no opportunity for other persons to
22 question or cross-examine presenters.

23 In addition to the public meetings,
24 the CEC is engaging consultants to assist us in
25 this review. The results of those research

1 endeavours will be posted on our website upon
2 receipt, which will likely be about the end of
3 June. Parties will be given, and by parties I
4 mean anyone who is interested, will be invited to
5 provide comment on any of those reports, if they
6 so wish. A reasonable, albeit brief period of
7 time, will be allowed for this.

8 Written submissions will also be
9 accepted. Information as to how to submit a
10 written suggestion is available on our website,
11 and the deadline for those is May 7th.

12 We also realize that many people are
13 reluctant to make presentations in public, for a
14 variety of reasons. To address that, we have
15 engaged a graduate student from the University of
16 Manitoba to meet with or talk with, on the phone,
17 people who would rather not speak at meetings.
18 These meetings will be kept in confidence.
19 Information as to how to contact her is available
20 on our website, as well as at the back of the
21 room.

22 Just some administrative matters. If
23 you wish to make a presentation today, and you
24 haven't already told us so, please register at the
25 table at the back of the room. As is our normal

1 practice, we are recording these sessions.
2 Verbatim transcripts will be available online in a
3 day or so. You can find the link to the
4 transcripts from our website.

5 Finally, cell phones, I would ask that
6 you turn cell phones off, or at least turn the
7 ring tone off. If you must take a call, I would
8 ask that you leave the room. And I would also ask
9 that you don't engage in any conversations in the
10 room while people are making presentations. Thank
11 you.

12 We will now proceed. The first person
13 on our agenda for this afternoon is Mr. Marvin
14 Magwood. Oh, could you take a seat at this table,
15 please, Mr. Magwood?

16 MR. MAGWOOD: Okay.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Any one of them. Would
18 you please state your name for the record?

19 MR. MAGWOOD: Marvin Magwood.

20 MARVIN MAGWOOD, having been sworn, presents as
21 follows:

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. And you may
23 proceed.

24 MR. MAGWOOD: Good afternoon, ladies
25 and gentlemen, Mr. Chairman, and Commissioners of

1 the Review Board. My name is Marvin Magwood. I
2 have lived in Killarney for my entire life, and I
3 plan on staying for the rest of it.

4 I would like to take the opportunity
5 to speak about the hog industry and how it has
6 impacted Killarney and the area. The industry is
7 relatively new to the area, with the first large
8 barns being built about ten years ago, and the
9 bulk of them being built in the last seven years.

10 Before the industry came to the area,
11 employment opportunities were minimal, with most
12 of our graduate classes going to university or
13 moving out west to seek employment.

14 Now that the industry has become
15 established here, there are more than 60 full-time
16 well-paying jobs right in the industry of hogs, as
17 well as the feed mills that supply the farms, with
18 18 full-time employees working there. These jobs
19 are well-paying, full benefits jobs that you can
20 raise a family with. These jobs were jobs that
21 weren't there before.

22 I, myself, have worked in the industry
23 for the last seven years now, and it has given me,
24 and many others, the opportunity to raise my
25 family in the same place where I was raised. It

1 also gives us the opportunity to support the
2 community and help keep Killarney from becoming a
3 retirement community.

4 I also want to speak on behalf of the
5 many people that work in these facilities, and
6 talk about how the sustainability of these
7 facilities is just as important to them as it is
8 to anybody else.

9 With these farms being built in the
10 last ten years, there is lots of good information
11 on how to make sure these farms were managed in a
12 way that would make them environmentally friendly,
13 as well as good neighbours. The Manitoba
14 government has already set out good regulations
15 that helps the large facilities stay within the
16 recommended guidelines and become good partners
17 with our surrounding landowners.

18 Most of the people that work on these
19 farms live right here in Killarney, and the lakes,
20 rivers and parks are just as important to them as
21 anyone else. We would like to protect them, these
22 resources, as much, if not more, than people who
23 live elsewhere.

24 I get disappointed when I tell people
25 what I do and they automatically jump to the

1 conclusion that we aren't environmentally
2 friendly, when it is one of the most heavily
3 regulated industries there is. When the Clean
4 Environment review does its audit of our industry,
5 I will be happy to see the results, so that the
6 province can see that we are doing our part to
7 help ensure that this industry is long-term and
8 sustainable. I am proud to say I'm a pig farmer
9 because I know that we are doing our part. Thank
10 you.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Magwood.
12 Just what do you do in the industry?

13 MR. MAGWOOD: I work as a production
14 manager for two sow farms in the area, as well as
15 nurseries and some finishing barns.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: So you work at a number
17 of different places?

18 MR. MAGWOOD: I have six different
19 facilities that I work at. I started six years
20 ago as a breeding technician at one of the farms.
21 And just through the different jobs and things
22 that I have had through promotion, I have worked
23 through to being a production manager at these
24 facilities.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Out of curiosity, were

1 you able to go into the business right out of high
2 school, or did you get agricultural education?

3 MR. MAGWOOD: I grew up on a mixed
4 farm just southwest of town here. And, actually,
5 I did construction for ten years before I got into
6 the industry. But with the construction in our
7 area, that is mainly seasonal. And so that is
8 what appealed with me with getting into this
9 industry.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: So you've basically,
11 aside from the knowledge you brought from growing
12 up on a farm, you've learned on-the-job?

13 MR. MAGWOOD: Right. It's been
14 on-farm training.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: And moved up to a
16 management position?

17 MR. MAGWOOD: Right. And with the
18 training from the companies that I worked for,
19 along with past experience that I have had, it has
20 I enabled me to move up and be in the position
21 that I am today.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: And all of these
23 facilities, the six, I think you said, they are
24 all close to Killarney?

25 MR. MAGWOOD: Four of them are right

1 directly in Killarney. And two that I actually
2 got involved in, in the last six months, are
3 actually in the Shoal Lake area.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: How far is that from
5 here?

6 MR. MAGWOOD: Two hours.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Up near Clear Lake?

8 MR. MAGWOOD: Up north, an hour north
9 of Brandon.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: And you say that there
11 are some 60 or more jobs in the industry in the
12 Killarney area?

13 MR. MAGWOOD: In the Turtle Mountain
14 area, yes. I have 35 employees that work in
15 Turtle Mountain with me, personally. And the
16 other jobs are with other hog operators that are
17 in our area, not to mention the owner/operators
18 that employ. So 60 is a modest number, as far as
19 full-time employment.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: And when you say Turtle
21 Mountain, what are, more or less, the boundaries
22 of the Turtle Mountain area?

23 MR. MAGWOOD: Just the R.M. Like we
24 have farms going over to Highway 5, finishing
25 units over there. The sow farms that I work with

1 are actually a mile straight east of town, so they
2 are right in the R.M. And then there are some
3 other farms that are towards -- that are west of
4 us, that are in Turtle Mountain as well. So when
5 I talk Turtle Mountain directly, right in the R.M.
6 of Turtle Mountain is where these farms are
7 located.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.
9 Wayne?

10 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. Mr. Magwood, are
11 you in charge of -- like, are you the boss of the
12 35 employees?

13 MR. MAGWOOD: Yes.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: You are?

15 MR. MAGWOOD: Yes.

16 MR. MOTHERAL: Would you consider that
17 the employees are happy in their jobs?

18 MR. MAGWOOD: Yes.

19 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. And I don't know
20 if this is a fair question or not, and maybe you
21 are not -- what would be the approximate total
22 payroll of these employees?

23 MR. MAGWOOD: Total payroll? You
24 would be taking me to school, and I would need to
25 do the math. But our average hourly rate, for the

1 employees that I work with, is between the \$18 and
2 \$20 per hour.

3 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay.

4 MR. MAGWOOD: Including benefits and
5 bonuses and all that we put in towards our
6 employees.

7 MR. MOTHERAL: And as you say, it
8 appears as though you are planning on retiring in
9 Killarney?

10 MR. MAGWOOD: Absolutely.

11 MR. MOTHERAL: And I don't know if you
12 are ever going to stop it from being a retirement
13 town because you should be proud that it's a
14 retirement town.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Say those of us that
16 are approaching retirement.

17 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. I'm proud to be
18 anywhere.

19 MR. MAGWOOD: Well, it is a good
20 retirement town, because we are also very proud of
21 it, but we also want to keep young people in it so
22 it is long-term.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: We people who are
24 either retired or approaching, we need young
25 people to look after us at times.

1 MR. MAGWOOD: That's right.

2 MR. MOTHERAL: That's all I have,
3 Mr. Chairman.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Edwin?

5 MR. YEE: Yes. Mr. Magwood, you've
6 indicated in your presentation that you feel that
7 the hog industry, I guess, in particular, you are
8 talking about here, is the most heavily regulated
9 industry. Do you feel that it is being
10 over-regulated?

11 MR. MAGWOOD: I don't think
12 over-regulated. These are regulations that have
13 been in place since I was involved. So I can't
14 comment what it was like 30 years ago before these
15 regulations came in, but they are always been
16 there. It is something I am very used to. But I
17 know about these regulations because we use them
18 every day. They are good regulations. And there
19 is a lot of regulations, so I think they are a
20 good part of the trade-off to make sure that we
21 are doing our job practically.

22 MR. YEE: And these facilities that
23 you work at, or that you are involved with, are
24 these fairly large operations or do they vary in
25 size?

1 MR. MAGWOOD: They are fairly large.
2 The facility's sow farms themselves, they have 14
3 employees. There is 3,700 sows and a 10,000 head
4 nurseries attached to them, so those facilities
5 are quite large, yes.

6 MR. YEE: Okay, thank you.

7 MR. MAGWOOD: Yes.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: The employees, the 60
9 or so, are they mostly young people from around
10 here?

11 MR. MAGWOOD: We have a fairly mixed
12 group of employees. A lot of them, or half of
13 them, would be younger people right out of high
14 school. There is zero training required. We
15 train on-farm, so those jobs are available. We
16 also have people that have farmed for 20 years
17 that have had enough of the farming and want to
18 try something different that are with us. And
19 middle aged, like myself, so it is a mixed group
20 of who works at the farms.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: I might take exception
22 to you referring to yourself at middle age. I
23 don't know what that makes me. But, anyway, most
24 of the people, or all of the people, are from the
25 area?

1 MR. MAGWOOD: Right. I think the
2 farthest drive anyone has is 20 minutes. We have
3 some people who live in Ninette.

4 MR. MOTHERAL: Just one more, and this
5 is a more technical question, will the new
6 phosphorus regulations affect any of your manure
7 management?

8 MR. MAGWOOD: As far as how -- like,
9 as far as how we manage to -- I am not completely
10 up-to-date with the new regulations that you guys
11 are looking at bringing in. But because we have
12 been managing our phosphorus close anyway in the
13 last ten years, I can't see it catching us off
14 guard. We have been trying to do the best we can
15 with our nutrients to get the most out of them,
16 anyway.

17 I know there is some new technology
18 that the company has been trying to work with to
19 lessen our phosphorus in our manure, anyway. So
20 without knowing what the new regulations would be,
21 I think we are probably working towards that,
22 anyway. So whatever would come into place, as
23 long as it was feasible for the farms, I can't see
24 it affecting us too much.

25 MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you. And just a

1 clarification, we have nothing to do with the
2 regulations.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Magwood.

5 MR. MAGWOOD: Okay, thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Next is Miriam Nichol.
7 Please state your name for the record?

8 MS. NICHOL: Miriam Nichol.

9 MIRIAM NICHOL, having been sworn, presents as
10 follows:

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may
12 proceed.

13 MS. NICHOL: Mr. Chairman, members of
14 the Commission Review Panel, ladies and gentlemen.

15 It's a privilege to present at this
16 very important public hearing for the hog
17 production industry review being conducted at the
18 request of the Manitoba Government.

19 We have reviewed the guide published
20 by the Clean Environment Commission and decided to
21 make a presentation based on our experiences, and
22 the wisdom we have gained from those experiences
23 in the hog industry.

24 My husband, Ron and I, have farmed in
25 the Killarney area for 35 years. During that

1 time, we have raised a variety of animals,
2 including pigs. We started out with an old hip
3 roof barn, raising mainly feeder pigs. We went
4 from there to a small farrow to finish operation,
5 where we cared for the sows in a loose housing
6 structure and farrowed and finished the pigs in a
7 hip roof straw-based born. We progressed from
8 there to moving a neighbour's barn to our farm,
9 where we, again, had a farrow to finish operation.
10 We soon realized that we needed to expand again.
11 So, in 1997, we built a 4,800 head nursery barn,
12 which we have owned and operated to this day.

13 Over the years, we have experienced
14 many changes in how we raised and fed our pigs.
15 Our initial experiences in raising pigs would be
16 considered archaic based on how we raise pigs
17 today. In the beginning, we never worried too
18 much about the quality of the feed, about
19 medicating pigs before slaughter, or about how we
20 got rid of the manure. Now, we follow very strict
21 rules and regulations for these things, plus many
22 other things. When we built our barns in 1997, we
23 were introduced to all of these rules and
24 regulations. And we, without hesitation, followed
25 them to a tee. Every one of the rules and

1 regulations were implemented in an effort to
2 protect the environment, enhance the health of the
3 pigs and the workers, and to satisfy the consumers
4 of our pigs. My, how things have changed in 35
5 years!

6 We believe that the way we raise pigs
7 today is far superior than the way we raised pigs
8 in 1972. Today, the pigs are fed a feed ration
9 that is developed by nutritionists, and it is
10 based on the age and the size of the pigs. The
11 pigs are housed in a climate-controlled
12 environment which, in many cases, are superior to
13 the housing of some of the people living in our
14 province.

15 We follow strict protocols of the
16 Canadian Quality Assurance Program that ensures
17 appropriate withdrawal times of all medication,
18 and addresses any incidents of broken needles,
19 plus many other quality assurance details. The
20 nutrients of the manure are carefully assessed and
21 injected into our spread fields based on the
22 nutrient and soil analyses.

23 Given the scope of the investigation,
24 we have the following comments to make about the
25 issues the CEC is particularly interested in. We

1 recognize and value the scientific evidence and
2 the expertise that is available in regards to
3 these issues. In addition, there is ongoing
4 research being conducted on these various issues
5 which will, in turn, change hog production
6 practices in the future. We have grouped some of
7 the issues outlined in the CEC guide simply for
8 ease of presenting, and to avoid duplication of
9 comments.

10 Nutrient management, manure management
11 and soil analysis. The rules and regulations in
12 place for applying hog manure to spread fields
13 provides protection to the environment. As
14 mentioned earlier, the nutrients of the manure are
15 carefully determined, and the manure is injected
16 into the spread fields based on the nutrient and
17 soil analyses. Once the nutrient content is
18 determined, manure is managed to benefit crop
19 production, with minimal risk to soil and
20 groundwater contamination.

21 The manure contains a number of
22 nutrients besides nitrogen and phosphorus that add
23 to the organic structure of the soil. These
24 nutrients eliminate the need for synthetic
25 fertilizers, and many of the manure nutrients are

1 not found in synthetic fertilizers. Therefore,
2 for the grain farmer, the cost of fertilizing a
3 crop is substantially reduced and the soil is
4 given other micro-nutrients, for example,
5 potassium, sodium, calcium, et cetera. Not all of
6 the manure nutrients are immediately available to
7 the crop, with approximately a quarter of the
8 organic nitrogen being available in the first
9 year, and decreasing amounts becoming available
10 during the next three years at a decreasing rate.

11 It is interesting to note that
12 although the livestock sectors, all livestock
13 sectors, are governed by these regulations, it is
14 our observation that the hog industry is probably
15 the most compliant and forward-thinking in regards
16 to environmental stewardship activities. Another
17 observation is that there is no government
18 monitoring of the application of synthetic
19 fertilizers. The only person monitoring the
20 application of synthetic fertilizers is the
21 farmer. In the majority of cases, farmers
22 voluntarily follow the soil analyses results
23 because synthetic fertilizers are expensive, and
24 no one wants to waste money on excessive use, just
25 as no one wants to waste manure, as it comes with

1 a price tag, too.

2 Groundwater quality, Groundwater
3 supply and surface water quality. As the majority
4 of the contents of the lagoons are essentially
5 water, and the contents of the lagoons, in most
6 cases, are being injected into the spread fields
7 based on the nutrient and soil analyses and the
8 set-backs from waterways, it is difficult to
9 understand that there would be a concern with
10 these issues.

11 The hog industry sets a wonderful
12 example of "recycling" the lagoon contents into
13 valuable crop nutrients. In addition, it has been
14 our observation that with spring application of
15 the lagoon contents, the germination of crops is
16 enhanced as a result of the extra moisture
17 provided, and this ultimately increases the
18 probability of higher yields in the fall. That
19 has been especially noted when spring moisture
20 levels are low.

21 We regularly test our well water to
22 ensure that there are no changes in the quality of
23 our water. Our well provides water to the pigs
24 and to our house; therefore, we drink the same
25 water as the pigs drink. Our well is located

1 approximately halfway between our house and the
2 barns. We have full confidence in the integrity
3 of our earthen storage lagoon; confidence that we
4 did not have when our pigs were housed in the
5 loose housing structure and our hip roof barn.

6 We believe that the government
7 regulations and the hog industry ensure that every
8 possible measure is taken to protect our
9 groundwater and surface water quality. We further
10 believe that the Manitoba Government should be
11 protecting our groundwater quality, and surface
12 water quality, by reviewing the waste disposal
13 practices of our cities, towns, villages, members
14 of the general public living on waterfront
15 properties, to ensure that our lakes and waterways
16 are not being polluted.

17 Odour. As with any industry, there
18 are times when there is more odour than other
19 times. We live in a farming community, and our
20 livelihoods depend on livestock and grain. There
21 is odour from any and all animal waste, including
22 human lagoons, as well as from certain grains.
23 Human perception is a huge factor, as odour
24 affects humans differently. For example, one
25 person may find the odour of something very

1 offensive, while the next person doesn't notice it
2 at all.

3 Our barns are located less than two
4 hydro poles away from our house. We acknowledge
5 that there are times that there is an odour.
6 However, we had our daughter's wedding in our
7 front yard, in the latter part of July, and for
8 all of the festivities, there was no odour.

9 With the ongoing research and improved
10 management practices, we have full confidence that
11 odour issues will continue to be increasingly
12 minimized in the future.

13 Disease transmission. Aside from the
14 fact that the Manitoba Government was encouraging
15 farmers to diversify, one of the main reasons that
16 we decided to build a nursery barn and operate
17 within a three-site production system was for the
18 strong evidence that it maximizes disease control.
19 We follow strict bio-security practices, which
20 assist in mitigating disease transmission. With
21 my pre-retirement life being a nurse, it is my
22 impression that the bio-security protocols
23 followed in our barn often exceed infection
24 control practices followed in hospitals. In
25 addition, the health of the pigs is closely

1 monitored, on a regular basis, by a veterinarian.

2 The distance from neighbouring barns
3 and hog transportation routes are factors that are
4 seriously considered when determining the site for
5 a new barn. It is our experience that hog
6 producers are sensitive to each other's existing
7 locations and practice due diligence in the
8 control of any outbreaks.

9 Climate change. This is an
10 interesting one, as there is so much media talk
11 about global warming. Yet, on the other hand, we
12 watched a program on the Discovery Channel that
13 showed there is evidence that we may be entering
14 into other ice age. We believe that it is
15 everyone's responsibility, not just the hog
16 industry, to take reasonable steps to ensure
17 minimal pollution of our environment.

18 Singling out the hog industry in such
19 a drastic manner, by putting a pause on all new
20 construction of hog barns, does not foster an
21 environment of cooperation and mutual
22 responsibility. It points the finger at one
23 sector, a sector that has apparently impacted
24 water quality by a mere one percent, with no
25 action being taken toward the big offenders. We

1 have one question: Why did the Manitoba
2 Government not impose a "pause" on all new
3 construction, including other industries and
4 housing, especially in areas where the population
5 is the most dense?

6 Environmental liability. Just as it
7 is everyone's responsibility to take reasonable
8 steps to ensure minimal pollution of our
9 environment, it is also the Manitoba Government's
10 responsibility to ensure that there are
11 appropriate regulations in place for all
12 Manitobans, and that those regulations and rules
13 are reasonable, achievable and enforced.
14 Education is a key component to environmental
15 stewardship, with equitable application of the
16 rules and regulations.

17 Final thoughts. It is noted under
18 "The Scope of the Investigation", in the Guide to
19 Public Participation in the Clean Environment
20 Commission Hog Production Industry Review that:

21 "...the focus of this Investigation to
22 be an inquiry into the impact of the
23 hog-production industry on the
24 indefinite sustainability of
25 Manitoba's physical and biological

1 world. The Commission also notes that
2 Manitoba's Principles and Guidelines
3 for Sustainable Development stress the
4 inter-relationship of the economic,
5 environmental, social and human health
6 decision-making, recognizing that the
7 decisions made in one sphere have
8 impacts on the others."

9 "Indefinite sustainability of
10 Manitoba's physical and biological
11 world,"

12 that's a long time and a huge undertaking. We
13 believe that if it is the desire of the Manitoba
14 Government to do this, then it is important for
15 the Government to look at all of the factors
16 impacting on Manitoba's physical and biological
17 world.

18 The hog industry in Killarney has
19 provided jobs and a rural lifestyle for many of
20 our young people, not only in the barns, but also
21 in all of the "spin-off" jobs. It has provided a
22 multitude of other economic spin-offs within the
23 Town of Killarney, and has provided an increased
24 assessment, which, in turn, benefits all of our
25 residents.

1 In the Rural Municipality of Turtle
2 Mountain, there are several proposed new barns now
3 on hold as a result of the "pause" imposed by the
4 Manitoba Government. The Government's action has
5 negatively impacted on our rural economic
6 development. In addition, one of the local
7 contractors, who is in the business of building
8 these barns, is heading to Alberta with his crew
9 of eight to ten people to work there for the next
10 ten months. We all know what happens to people
11 who go to Alberta to work, the vast majority does
12 not come back to Manitoba.

13 The more we think about what has
14 happened as a result of the Manitoba Government's
15 actions towards the hog industry, the more we
16 think that this whole process is nothing but
17 "smoke and mirrors" in an election year, something
18 to camouflage other more important issues that the
19 public should be addressing. In the meantime,
20 Manitoba loses out again with economic growth and
21 development, something that is very much needed in
22 this province, both rural and urban. It would be
23 great if the Manitoba Government focused on things
24 that would turn our province into a "have"
25 province, instead of the "have not" status that we

1 currently hold.

2 Thank you for the opportunity to
3 express our views.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Nichol.
5 Wayne?

6 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. I will just have
7 to gather my thoughts here, Mr. Chairman. Thank
8 you for that excellent presentation. It was
9 certainly well structured. And you didn't just do
10 that in one passing, it looked like you did some
11 research.

12 MS. NICHOL: No, I didn't. I think
13 this might be the hardest part, though, is the
14 questions.

15 MR. MOTHERAL: No, we don't ask hard
16 questions. In your operation, are your lagoons
17 covered?

18 MS. NICHOL: Straw covered, yes, we
19 have done that.

20 MR. MOTHERAL: You have done it.

21 MS. NICHOL: We empty our lagoons in
22 the spring and fall. We are a smaller operation,
23 if you can believe that. We started out being the
24 biggest operation in the municipality, and now we
25 are about the smallest.

1 MR. MOTHERAL: And how big is that?
2 What do you have?

3 MS. NICHOL: Well, we have a 4,800
4 head nursery, which means we get baby pigs from
5 the moms at 20 days old and raise them to about
6 60 pounds, and then they go to the feeder site.
7 That's what I mean by the three-site production
8 system. The babies are born in one site, and then
9 they come to us, and then they go to the feeder
10 barn.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: You only do that middle
12 part?

13 MS. NICHOL: Yes, we do.

14 MR. MOTHERAL: When you mentioned, and
15 we have heard it now in two presentations, it's
16 the economic development in Killarney area in the
17 past seven to ten years, has certainly been
18 focused on the hog industry. Is there any other
19 economic development in this area that would match
20 that?

21 MS. NICHOL: I would say not. But
22 maybe, you know, when one of the councillors
23 presents, they would be able to talk to that
24 topic.

25 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. I am not going

1 to let council off the hook, either, being a
2 former councillor.

3 MS. NICHOL: I am passing the buck.

4 MR. MOTHERAL: Do you believe that the
5 development plan of the municipality has
6 sufficient, is sufficient, let's say, for example,
7 set-backs, et cetera, like that for the industry,
8 or do you think it's very onerous? Do you think
9 that everything is fine that way?

10 MS. NICHOL: We have always been able
11 to live within the existing rules that are out
12 there and the regulations that are there. And so
13 we have not had a problem with implementing
14 anything.

15 MR. MOTHERAL: Well, that's good to
16 hear. I mean, I know there are minimum set-backs
17 that are set out in the Act. But, I mean, every
18 municipal council can change them. I mean, they
19 have to go with the minimum, but set-backs can be
20 more. And maybe I'll have my chance to speak to
21 somebody afterwards about that. I will maybe come
22 back, Mr. Chairman. I will go over my notes to
23 ask some more questions.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

25 MR. YEE: Maybe just along the lines

1 of the regulations, we have heard varying views of
2 the regulations. In most cases, most people think
3 they are acceptable and they can live within them.
4 And I have often asked this question, in terms of
5 regulatory controls, though, we have heard that
6 there has been some difficulty, or there lacks a
7 one-window approach, in terms of getting approvals
8 for expansion of your activities in the hog
9 industry. Do you find that at all or has that
10 been noted in this particular part of the
11 province?

12 MS. NICHOL: Well, I think when we
13 went to get approval in 1996 here, it seemed like
14 it took a lot of time to get all of the different
15 permits in place, and the approvals, and whatnot.
16 But just by, you know, going with hearsay, I think
17 it's far more difficult now and takes a lot
18 longer. It's not a quick and dirty process to put
19 up a hog barn.

20 MR. YEE: So do you see some value in
21 government looking at streamlining the process or
22 having better coordination of approvals?

23 MS. NICHOL: Definitely, yes.

24 MR. YEE: Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have any

1 thoughts on how that might be done?

2 MS. NICHOL: Well, you know, I worked
3 in government, so I know that you can get bogged
4 down in a lot of red tape. And, you know, there
5 is different agencies that are involved within the
6 government departments within the government that
7 are involved in getting a barn up and running.
8 Perhaps if they had one that, you know, fielded
9 all of those different departments into one part
10 then it would be easier. I don't know. Like, I
11 haven't even thought of that.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting
13 perhaps a one-stop shop or something?

14 MS. NICHOL: Yes. It seems like we
15 all want that, whether we are shopping at Wal-Mart
16 or whatever.

17 MR. YEE: No, that's it for me.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Ms. Nichol, you made a
19 passing comment about -- where is it? Another
20 observation is that:

21 "There is no government monitoring of
22 the application of synthetic
23 fertilizers."

24 You are not suggesting that they get into that,
25 are they?

1 MS. NICHOL: No. I would be shot
2 before I got out of the building.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I just wanted to
4 clarify that.

5 MS. NICHOL: No. But I think what I
6 want to say there is that government -- or that
7 the farmers are very careful about their own
8 property. They are not wanting to ruin their soil
9 so that they can't grow a crop, say, the next
10 year, and it is not there for the next generation
11 coming along. So I think farmers, they practice
12 due diligence when it comes to that kind of thing.
13 And the cost of it is very prohibitive too, so you
14 don't want to be wasting it, to begin with. There
15 is not a lot of money rolling around in farming.
16 At least if there is, most of the people in this
17 community haven't seen that.

18 MR. YEE: Just one more question,
19 Ms. Nichol. You mentioned your hog operation is
20 now one of the smaller ones. Do you see a trend
21 that, because of the economic sustainability in
22 the hog industry, that there is a requirement to
23 operate fairly larger operations than smaller
24 operations?

25 MS. NICHOL: I would think so. But it

1 is difficult to think about expanding when you
2 have something like a pause land on your plate.
3 It is something that I think has really, you know,
4 been a real detriment to the hog industry. And it
5 sets a feeling of uncertainty within you as to,
6 you know, well, should you expand or should you
7 just, you know, wait?

8 Like, I think generally the way things
9 are going, yes, expanding is the way to go. But
10 then when you have a pause like this thrown at
11 you, you know, and it is very unexpected then you
12 think, well, what else can come our way? And then
13 you have all of these hearings that are being
14 held, you know, to determine if our environmental
15 regulations are up to snuff. And then you think,
16 well, what else is going to come? So, you know,
17 there is an element of reservation, and even fear,
18 when it comes to, you know, what we might be
19 facing down the road.

20 And yet, on the other hand, we don't
21 want to ruin our environment either. Like I said,
22 we think the review is good, but then you want to
23 make sure that whatever comes out of it, that it
24 is reasonable and it is achievable. Because,
25 after all, when you talk about the environment,

1 you know, we are all polluting the environment in
2 this room just because we are all breathing, you
3 know, and so you can't get ridiculous about what
4 we do.

5 MR. YEE: Thank you.

6 MR. MOTHERAL: Ms. Nichol, the process
7 that an intensive livestock operation, hence the
8 hog barn with the intensive -- or with the
9 planning process that municipalities have in this
10 area, is it -- do you find, in this particular
11 area, with the combined, with rural and the town
12 under one jurisdiction, that it is probably an
13 easier or more difficult process to go through
14 with the conditional uses, et cetera, with the
15 public hearings? Now, I'm talking about how you
16 have got everybody all involved now. It is not
17 two corporations, it's one. Do you find it
18 beneficial from the perception of the hog
19 industry?

20 MS. NICHOL: I think time will tell
21 with that. To my knowledge, there hasn't been a
22 conditional use hearing with the new council. But
23 I certainly recognize that the town councillors
24 that are currently on our council know how
25 important the hog industry is. And a lot of them

1 come from the farming background. So, you know,
2 we just hope that if the conditional use meets all
3 of the requirements that the council will not
4 stand in the way.

5 MR. MOTHERAL: No. I mean, that's
6 just good news to hear. There has been part of
7 that push for years, and I'm glad to see that it
8 happened. I don't know. There are probably mixed
9 feelings out there.

10 MS. NICHOL: Well, I think, too, that,
11 you know, in the last few years, most of the
12 economic growth and development in this community
13 has been in the rural part of the community, and
14 the town knows that. I know they have struggled
15 to get things going in the town, but it's been
16 difficult.

17 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. Thanks very
18 much.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Nichol.
20 Gerry Blixhavn. Please state your name for the
21 record?

22 MR. BLIXHAVN: My name is Gerry
23 Blixhavn.

24 GERRY BLIXHAVN, having been sworn, presents as
25 follows:

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. And please
2 proceed.

3 MR. BLIXHAVN: Good afternoon, ladies
4 and gentlemen, and members of the Clean
5 Environment Commission. My name is, as I have
6 stated, Gerry Blixhavn.

7 I am here today to represent a family
8 farm operation that includes Blixhavn Farms and
9 South Pork Feeders. We produce cereals, oilseeds,
10 forage and hogs. Blixhavn Farms is owned by my
11 brother, Tom, and I. South Pork Feeders is owned
12 and operated by my nephews, Jason and Jeffrey.

13 My hope here today is that the Clean
14 Environment Commission will be focused on issues
15 that fall within the intended scope, and base
16 their recommendations on scientific fact.

17 Manure is recognized as a valuable
18 fertilizer and soil conditioner for producers. As
19 producers, we recognize the importance of nutrient
20 management regulations under Water Stewardship and
21 comply with the Manure Management Plans and soil
22 test for manure application and apply nutrients
23 accordingly. I believe that the hog industry has
24 always responded to challenges and, in most cases,
25 have acted in a responsible fashion. We are very

1 concerned with water quality and supply in both
2 surface and groundwater. And it has always been
3 in the best interests of producers to protect our
4 water supply. We need well managed soil and clean
5 water for both humans and animals.

6 As producers in Manitoba, we have to
7 comply with the most stringent environmental
8 regulations in North America. This was stated by
9 the Minister of Conservation December of 2006.
10 The standards to which manure storage has to be
11 built exceed any standards in any other
12 jurisdiction in North America. And I believe
13 these standards serve Manitoba's hog industry
14 well.

15 Nutrient management research is
16 ongoing through the University of Manitoba,
17 Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences, that is
18 studying hog manure, its application and plant
19 utilization. This study is based in Manitoba, and
20 will provide valuable information for our climate
21 and soil.

22 As for odour control in the R.M. of
23 Killarney, Turtle Mountain, we are required by
24 conditional use to provide straw covers for our
25 lagoons. The straw cover is applied twice each

1 year, in April and July, which works as well as a
2 synthetic cover, when maintained. I can verify
3 this personally, as our home sits 200 yards away
4 from our hog barn. Odour is an issue for many
5 people, and can be minimized if covers are in
6 place. Industry research is looking for new uses
7 for manure, such as the production of bio-gas
8 which, in turn, will reduce odour and provide job
9 creation and revenue.

10 The hog industry is a thriving
11 industry at the present time. The current
12 moratorium is having a negative effect on present
13 and future producers, as well as industries
14 directly or indirectly related. It seems very
15 unfair to hog producers to have all of the
16 attention focused on us as the bad boys of the
17 environment.

18 We are required to have an abundance
19 of data with respect to the environment, starting
20 with the province's own technical review on every
21 proposed hog operation. Once the operation is
22 running, we are required to file a Manure
23 Management Plan, and provide soil and water
24 samples.

25 With regards to the moratorium, it

1 seems like the present government is focusing too
2 much attention to public perception versus facts.
3 It would appear that the present government is
4 unfairly targeting hog producers to support their
5 environmental policies.

6 I believe more research should be
7 pursued to seek out all other sources of water and
8 soil contamination, and make those sources just as
9 accountable. Don't just point fingers at the hog
10 industry, which is already regulated, and are
11 being good stewards of land and water.

12 In closing, the hog industry has
13 allowed my nephews to stay on the farm and have a
14 future in Manitoba. Our hog operation has made
15 the family farm financially viable to pass down to
16 the next generation. Not all young people wish to
17 move to urban centers or out of the province for
18 employment. Some, like my nephews, value a rural
19 lifestyle and have chosen to remain in rural
20 Manitoba.

21 As quoted in the Brandon Sun recently:

22 "Farmers should not have to fear that
23 they will be expected to do otherwise
24 by politicians driven to win urban
25 votes in an election year."

1 Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf
2 of my family farm.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
4 Mr. Blixhavn. Did you say that the local
5 municipal conditional use approvals require straw
6 covers?

7 MR. BLIXHAVN: No. Yeah, the
8 conditional use approval does.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, it says:
10 "We as producers in the R.M. of
11 Killarney-Turtle Mountain are required
12 by conditional use to provide straw
13 cover on our lagoons."

14 MR. BLIXHAVN: Right.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: So that is a
16 conditional use?

17 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes. There is a tree
18 buffer that's also required around the sites, as
19 well.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: That's part of the
21 municipal requirement, as well?

22 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: And what kind of a tree
24 buffer?

25 MR. BLIXHAVN: Trees.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: But how many rows of
2 different?

3 MR. BLIXHAVN: I forget the minimum.
4 I think it's three rows. Yes, I think it's three
5 rows.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: And different kinds of
7 trees or same kind?

8 MR. BLIXHAVN: I think it says
9 fast-growing trees. I am not certain on the exact
10 wording.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I know that one
12 municipality we heard from, it was two different
13 kinds of trees and three rows.
14 Wayne?

15 MR. MOTHERAL: And I have really read
16 a lot about hogs in the last two months, I'll tell
17 yeah. And, like, I'm a farmer, but I've never
18 raised any animals. This technical review on
19 every proposed hog operation, I understood that it
20 was for 300 animal units or more?

21 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes, it is now.

22 MR. MOTHERAL: Because you said here
23 that it is on every one.

24 MR. BLIXHAVN: I'm sorry about that.

25 MR. MOTHERAL: So I was right? I'm

1 proud of myself.

2 MR. BLIXHAVN: There isn't many hog
3 operations started under 300 animal units any more
4 in our municipality.

5 MR. MOTHERAL: That's all, thank you
6 very much.

7 MR. YEE: Oh, Mr. Blixhavn, just one
8 quick question.

9 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes.

10 MR. YEE: What types of soil
11 management do you use when you spread it on your
12 fields?

13 MR. BLIXHAVN: Well, we soil test.
14 And whatever the soil test requirement is, we put
15 the manure on. I have actually sold -- or my
16 brother and I have sold the hog barn to my nephews
17 just this past summer. And we are still involved
18 in the family farm, but I don't look after that
19 anymore. And my nephew is more up to speed on
20 that, so he can be more specific on those
21 questions.

22 MR. YEE: Is it a liquid manure or
23 solid?

24 MR. BLIXHAVN: It is liquid.

25 MR. YEE: Would it be injected?

1 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes, it is.

2 MR. MOTHERAL: One more, and I don't
3 know if this is a fair question or not, have you
4 had any complaints from your neighbours? And
5 maybe that's personal. I don't know if I should
6 be asking that.

7 MR. BLIXHAVN: And I will answer that
8 question. I'm on council, so I have a lot of
9 complaints about hog barns. Well, not a lot of
10 complaints, but I have had complaints about hog
11 barns. But from our neighbourhood, and our
12 neighbours where our barn is located, I just
13 cannot recall anybody complaining to me about our
14 barn.

15 MR. MOTHERAL: And what I should have
16 said was concern, any concern?

17 MR. BLIXHAVN: Well, no, I can't say
18 that I've had complaints about our barn.

19 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, that's good.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, hopefully,
21 Mr. Blixhavn, by the end of our review, or at the
22 end of our review, hog farmers will be viewed as
23 the good boys of the environment, at least in the
24 agricultural field. Thank you. Dwight King.
25 Please state your name for the record?

1 MR. KING: Dwight King.

2 DWIGHT KING, having been sworn, presents as
3 follows:

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may
5 proceed.

6 MR. KING: I would like to thank the
7 Committee for the opportunity to speak. I am a
8 grain and oilseed producer. The R.M. of
9 Killarney, Turtle Mountain has 17 ILOs with
10 licensed lagoons, representing approximately ten
11 percent of the portioned assessment.

12 I have, as a councillor for the R.M.,
13 attended all of the conditional use hearings over
14 an 11-year period. Notices are sent to the
15 residents and landowners within a two mile radius
16 for the conditional use hearings. They are also
17 invited to an informal meeting with the Technical
18 Review Committee, and members of council to review
19 the report, usually two weeks before the
20 conditional use hearing. As a member of council,
21 I have relied heavily on the Technical Review
22 Committee's report and expertise.

23 The Government pause fuels uncertainty
24 in the livestock industry. A large number of
25 changes to the regulations have been implemented,

1 and based on science, these have been considered
2 improvements.

3 In 2001, the councils of Turtle
4 Mountain and the Town of Killarney implemented a
5 three mile buffer zone around Killarney and a one
6 mile buffer at Ninga, Holmfield and Pelican Lake.
7 Within these areas, no ILOs could be located.

8 The R.M. of Killarney-Turtle Mountain
9 requires all lagoons to be covered by May 1st.
10 Extensions are granted, with written requests; for
11 example, completion of spring application for
12 manure, which is required to be injected into the
13 soil, spring or fall.

14 Killarney Lake is located in our
15 community as a water source for potable drinking
16 water and recreation. It is very important to our
17 community. It is a typical prairie lake that has
18 suffered from algae blooms for centuries. The
19 past treatment for this problem was Blue Stone, or
20 copper sulfate, of which 60 tons lie at the bottom
21 of Killarney Lake.

22 Killarney Lake Water Quality Committee
23 was formed in 1996, and was made up of members
24 from the Manitoba Conservation, PFRA, Council and
25 members of the community. Water tests were

1 checked at designated locations along the Long
2 River Watershed. This watershed begins in a
3 large, forested area in the Turtle Mountain,
4 Wakopa Conservation area on the United States and
5 Canadian side of the border. Water samples were
6 collected at several locations. The first was at
7 the edge of the Turtle Mountain natural area. The
8 second was downstream from spread acres for manure
9 management. The third was several miles of crop
10 land. And a final collection was downstream from
11 a cattle operation. The steep elevation is the
12 largest contributor for turbidity and phosphorus
13 loading.

14 The Long River runs parallel to
15 Highway 3 and Killarney Lake, with flow access by
16 two bridges crossing the highway. Peak flow
17 pushed the cleaner water out of the lake and
18 replaced it with nutrient-rich water. Highway
19 reconstruction and removal of the old bridges
20 allowed for an opportunity for controls. Culverts
21 with control gates allow the heavy flow to pass by
22 on lake -- by the lake. And with testing and
23 experience, the gates are opened to recharge the
24 lake with the slower flow, which is cleaner and
25 has reduced levels of phosphorus.

1 The Canadian Manitoba Farm Stewardship
2 Program, which ends March 2008, is a program that
3 allows producers to self-evaluate their operations
4 and accelerate the adoption of beneficial
5 management practices on farms for water, soil and
6 the environment. There is a benefit to this
7 program, and funding of the program should be
8 extended with producers evaluating and
9 implementing improvements to their environmental
10 farm plans yearly.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. King.

12 You note in your first paragraph that:

13 "As a council member, you rely heavily
14 on the Technical Review Committee
15 report and expertise."

16 Are you generally -- as a councillor, are you
17 generally satisfied with how that operation or
18 that process works?

19 MR. KING: Yes. It wasn't in place
20 the first few technical or conditional uses. And
21 then they were implemented a few years later, and
22 it was a vast improvement. And they do take a lot
23 longer. The turn-around time, it is in their
24 hands for -- well, it went from months for the
25 whole process to almost a year now. It's taking a

1 lot longer, and the paperwork is almost identical.
2 It's just that they are taking a lot longer,
3 that's for sure.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: You've said, though,
5 that it does work well?

6 MR. KING: Oh, yes.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: And then that it works
8 better than it used to?

9 MR. KING: Oh, yes.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: But the length of the
11 process, do you think that that should be
12 shortened, or are they conducting more reviews in
13 that time?

14 MR. KING: Well, it is -- I am not
15 sure how much they are doing. But I know that
16 from the time that we forward the paperwork from
17 the office to the Committee, it's several more
18 months longer now. And we've just changed from
19 one district to another, and now we have new
20 people. And we have only had one technical review
21 under that system.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: But, in general, you
23 think it works well?

24 MR. KING: Oh, yes, very well.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: And they provide you

1 with good information to help you make your
2 decisions?

3 MR. KING: Yes. And, you know,
4 sitting down with the Committee informally, and we
5 go right through it, we've learned a lot of how
6 they do arrive at what they do. It's been very
7 important.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. I'm
9 sorry, Wayne?

10 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes, just on the
11 environmental farm plans, I know this was brought
12 up yesterday at our hearing in -- where were we
13 yesterday?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Morden.

15 MR. MOTHERAL: Oh, my hometown. I'm
16 sorry. Is there financial assistance involved
17 with that?

18 MR. KING: Yes. I went through the
19 system and using it now. Some of it is just
20 30 percent. But you can see that you need to make
21 changes, and it helps, yeah. And it does make you
22 do them a little quicker.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: And this is strictly a
24 volunteer type of program?

25 MR. KING: Very volunteer. You do not

1 leave any data for them. You go through the
2 booklet yourself. And then they sit there, and
3 they don't take any notes, and you're not under
4 the finger of the government.

5 MR. MOTHERAL: You evaluate yourself
6 what you are doing?

7 MR. KING: Yes.

8 MR. MOTHERAL: And just one more
9 question in this, you lost me in the Killarney
10 Lake, but actually what was happening was help
11 cleaning the lake?

12 MR. KING: Yes. And Killarney Lake
13 does have several algae blooms. And last year was
14 our best year. It was very good for the amount of
15 sunlight we have had. But there is a two-year
16 cycle on algae. You maybe have a good year and
17 then next year she is wild.

18 MR. MOTHERAL: That's all I have.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: On this Blue Stone, or
20 copper sulfate, that you used to attack the algae,
21 does that have any other affects? You said that
22 there is 60 tons of it lying at the bottom of the
23 lake?

24 MR. KING: It doesn't break down. It
25 only kills the algae. As it passes it, it

1 ruptures the cell. And at one time they used to
2 use a scoop shovel, to be really crude. And then
3 they separated it and were using only a small
4 number of bags. But it is something that you are
5 not allowed to use, and shouldn't be allowed to
6 use. They just -- what will happen is the algae
7 will, I would say, mutate and then be resistant to
8 it, anyways. There is some in the country. But
9 in this lake it was heavily used.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: So this is in the past?

11 MR. KING: Yes. It has been several
12 years since they were allowed to do it.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: But it is still at the
14 bottom of the lake?

15 MR. KING: Yes.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Does it have any
17 affects on the lake?

18 MR. KING: Not once it is down below
19 it doesn't.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: It doesn't affect fish
21 or anything?

22 MR. KING: No. Other than when algae
23 dies, it takes the oxygen out. And if you were to
24 do the whole lake, it would have been a detriment.
25 They only used to do a portion of it.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

2 MR. MOTHERAL: Would you attribute any
3 of the algae to the hog industry?

4 MR. KING: No. It was there before.
5 They did tests out of the university. An
6 individual tested core samples, and back in the
7 buffalo days, it was pretty bad.

8 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, thank you.

9 MR. YEE: Mr. King, I have noticed you
10 mentioned in your presentation about some of the
11 requirements. And we have heard earlier on from
12 other presenters R.M. requirements for hog
13 operation covered lagoons. You in noted it needs
14 to be injected into the soil. Is that a by-law or
15 conditional use requirement?

16 MR. KING: It is part of it for
17 cultivated acres. We prefer the aerated system
18 for forage and pastures, but it is a requirement
19 for anything that's cultivated.

20 MR. YEE: So I guess my next question
21 is my understanding of the new Planning Act is
22 that municipalities no longer have that ability,
23 they require this?

24 MR. KING: Yes.

25 MR. YEE: How do you see this

1 affecting you, or how do you see this affecting
2 the municipality here?

3 MR. KING: Well, it is under
4 government regulations now. We don't -- it is not
5 part of our -- we are, more or less, in charge of
6 smell and odour, and that's about, as far as it
7 goes. The Conservation people have their
8 technicians for the site, and everything else.
9 We're just a small part, but we are just location
10 and odour control now.

11 MR. YEE: So do you feel the new
12 Planning Act has negatively affected how the
13 municipality reviews?

14 MR. KING: No. It was very minor
15 changes. We just weren't allowed to have a couple
16 of clauses in there. And we just switched
17 ownership, more or less.

18 MR. YEE: Right. Okay. And, I guess,
19 because of your good rapport with the Technical
20 Review Committees, like, you can address these
21 issues?

22 MR. KING: Yes. No, we found that
23 what started off with having all of these people,
24 we had one site that it was the crowd of people
25 that pointed out things. And we wanted to be more

1 on top of our game, because we do not want to hear
2 them at the technical review level. At our
3 conditional use level, we want to know about it
4 before.

5 MR. YEE: Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
7 Mr. King.

8 MR. KING: Thank you.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Next is Mr. Wayne
10 Nichol. Please state your name for the record?

11 MR. NICHOL: Wayne Nichol.

12 WAYNE NICHOL, having been sworn, presents as
13 follows:

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may
15 proceed.

16 MR. NICHOL: First of all, I would
17 like to thank the Clean Environment Commission for
18 giving me a chance to make a presentation at your
19 hearing.

20 My name is Wayne Nichol, as you've
21 heard. My brother, Calvin, and I farm 3,000-acres
22 of crop land. We have 130 cow/calf operation and
23 a 5,200 finisher hog operation. In addition, we
24 have 40 percent ownership in Cloverleaf Pork,
25 which is a 10,400 feeder hog operation.

1 To begin with, I would like to explain
2 how we got into the industry. Back six or seven
3 years ago, grain prices were low and the farm was
4 struggling financially. We were not making very
5 much progress. Calvin and I talked a lot about
6 this, and decided we had to do something more or
7 we were going to risk losing the business. Rather
8 than get bigger in the grain and cow/calf
9 operation, we decided to diversify into the hog
10 industry. There looked like some good benefits to
11 that. The industry showed, for example, that
12 there was a decent return on investment, and the
13 value of the manure as a fertilizer would
14 definitely reduce our fertilizer costs. The
15 financial benefit was the most important to us.
16 As of today it, has been real good to us, with a
17 reasonable return on the investment and the
18 fertilizer benefit has been phenomenal.

19 When we built these barns, we followed
20 the Farm Practice Guidelines for hog producers in
21 Manitoba. The lagoons were built to
22 specifications, and Manitoba Conservation was
23 there to inspect the clay-packed lagoons as they
24 were being built. There are monitoring wells on
25 all four sides of the lagoon. This was a great

1 idea. We sample the water from these monitoring
2 wells every year to check for any signs of
3 seepage.

4 I am happy to say that there is no
5 sign of any seepage or pollution to the water.
6 Everything is working the way it was meant to.
7 The rules and regulations that we have in place we
8 can live with. So far, there has been common
9 sense used. I am concerned, though, with what
10 will happen after these hearings. Hopefully any
11 rules and regulations will be based on common
12 sense, and we will be able to continue to build
13 the industry.

14 Before we spread the manure, we
15 complete a Manure Management Plan and take soil
16 samples. We then submit the completed plan to the
17 Conservation Department. We must follow the
18 recommendations and make sure that we do not
19 over-fertilize. Farmers do not want to waste the
20 nutrients, as it is costly to do that. You only
21 put the nutrients into the soil that the plants
22 can use. We use the airway injecting system to
23 inject the fertilizer to eliminate run-off. This
24 is a very good system, and one of the best ways to
25 do the job.

1 We, as farmers, are always trying to
2 look at ways to maintain the land and improve it
3 for the next generation. On our farm, we have
4 been zero tilling for approximately 20 years.
5 Zero tilling stops erosion caused by washing most
6 of the runways and stops wind erosion on our soil.
7 By adding zero till and hog manure to our land, we
8 are seeing the organic manner of the soil
9 improving and the benefits are showing up more
10 every year.

11 The special nutrients in hog manure
12 eliminate the need for commercial fertilizer on
13 our fields. With our two barns and the cost of
14 fertilizer at \$800 a tonne this spring, the cost
15 savings are approximately \$60,000 a year. If you
16 add the organic manner increase in the soil, and
17 the cost savings, it adds significantly to the
18 profitability of our farm.

19 Odour can be an issue, no doubt. To
20 help minimize odour, we cover the lagoons in the
21 spring and patch up again in June and July with
22 barley straw. This definitely helps. High
23 humidity mornings or hot humid days seem to be the
24 worst. I would say that we have approximately 25
25 or 30 days out of 365 in a year where the odour is

1 notable or a problem.

2 The good thing is that there is
3 thousands of dollars being spent on research every
4 year to come up with affordable solutions to these
5 odour concerns. I am convinced that they will
6 come up with something in the next few years.

7 Plastic covers are cost prohibitive,
8 and they only last five to eight years, so the
9 economics of that don't pencil out. The one thing
10 we must remember is that hog odour is not the only
11 odour out there. Cattle feedlots have odour, as
12 do chicken barns, town lagoons, sprays, as well as
13 pulp and paper mills, just to mention a few. So
14 why the fuss about all of the hog barns? Pigs are
15 like any animal, including humans, they have waste
16 products, too.

17 The one thing I want to emphasize is
18 farmers are probably the best stewards of the land
19 that there is. We grew up on the land. You work
20 and you live on that farm for 365 days a year.
21 You learn, as you go, how to keep your soil
22 healthy and to work to make it produce. I am not
23 convinced that farmers are the real culprits in
24 the nutrient loading of Lake Winnipeg or other
25 lakes. There is science out there that tells that

1 you say we are a very small part of the problem.
2 There are a lot worse polluters out there than
3 farmers. Big factories and cities are dumping
4 their wastes right into those water systems. I
5 think because we are such a -- I think they are
6 targeting us because we are such a small minority
7 and an easy target. We, as farmers, are doing
8 everything we can, and keep our eyes and ears
9 open, to see what else we can do. If anything
10 does present itself, we are the first to deal with
11 it. Let's face it, we all want clean water, and
12 that's a given.

13 The one last thing I wanted to
14 mention, and you've probably already heard this,
15 or will hear it, and you have, is the benefit that
16 it has provided to our community. We have got
17 down here between 100 to 200 young families living
18 here in Killarney because of the hog industry.
19 But I think I am taking in a little bigger circle
20 than what maybe Marvin is. These people would be
21 in Alberta, Winnipeg or Brandon, or somewhere
22 else, other than here. Rural Manitoba needs these
23 young people, too. We can't all live in the
24 cities. After all, someone has to be in these
25 rural communities working on our farms to derive

1 the cheap food that us farmers are used to
2 providing. Thank you for your time and attention
3 to this presentation.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Nichol.
5 Can we get a copy of your written notes, please?
6 Did you say you had 4,800 head hog operation?

7 MR. NICHOL: No. We have a 5,200 head
8 finisher barn.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: It's just a finisher
10 barn?

11 MR. NICHOL: Right.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: And it's Maple Leaf
13 Pork that you mentioned?

14 MR. NICHOL: Cloverleaf Pork.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: See, that's what
16 happens.

17 MR. NICHOL: Cloverleaf Pork.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: I had the middle part
19 of it right.

20 MR. NICHOL: Yes.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: And is that in this
22 area?

23 MR. NICHOL: Yeah. We are a
24 40 percent shareholder. But it is very close to
25 us.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: And what kind of an
2 operation is Cloverleaf?

3 MR. NICHOL: It's the same, a
4 finisher.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: A finisher as well?

6 MR. NICHOL: Yes.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.
8 Wayne?

9 MR. NICHOL: There are some typing
10 errors in there. I am not a very good typer.

11 MR. MOTHERAL: I will call you
12 Mr. Nichol now. I will call you something
13 different at coffee time.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I hope it's respectful.

15 MR. NICHOL: So do I.

16 MR. MOTHERAL: Just a question, do you
17 still have your 140 cow/calf?

18 MR. NICHOL: 130, yes, we do.

19 MR. MOTHERAL: 130 cow/calf. When you
20 submit a Manure Management Plan, do you have to
21 submit one for that, too?

22 MR. NICHOL: No.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: Not yet?

24 MR. NICHOL: Not yet.

25 MR. MOTHERAL: So your animal units

1 are under on the cattle?

2 MR. NICHOL: Pardon me?

3 MR. MOTHERAL: You don't have to do
4 that with your cattle operation?

5 MR. NICHOL: No.

6 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. When you said
7 also your organic manner, you were talking about
8 the value of your manure fertilizer? Organic
9 manner, I am just guessing, would be attributed to
10 the zero till or not to the hog manure?

11 MR. NICHOL: Well, I think a
12 combination of both, yeah.

13 MR. MOTHERAL: A combination of both.

14 MR. NICHOL: Yes.

15 MR. MOTHERAL: That's about all I had
16 down. I might have had more if I had had this
17 presentation for an outline.

18 MR. NICHOL: I should have given you
19 that first, sorry.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: When did you build your
21 barns?

22 MR. NICHOL: About five years ago and
23 then six for the first one.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

25 MR. YEE: I think I just have one

1 question, Mr. Nichol. In terms of -- you
2 mentioned in terms of the regulatory framework
3 right now it's acceptable. And we have heard that
4 from other presenters. But you are concerned
5 about changes in the future. I just wondered, in
6 terms of the regulations, the new amendments in
7 the phosphorus regs, is that going to affect you,
8 or do you see that as a negative for the hog
9 industry?

10 MR. NICHOL: I don't see it affecting
11 us. Because we have enough acres around us, so if
12 we need to go out farther, we can. This industry
13 up here is fairly new. And there is a lot of area
14 between all of these barns up here. So I don't
15 think that will be an issue here, not in this
16 municipality.

17 MR. YEE: Thank you.

18 MR. MOTHERAL: One more comment. We
19 have been hearing this several times, and we
20 realize that the industry is heavily regulated.
21 If, for some chance, there are any new
22 regulations, we have heard the report from some
23 people that they say that they could probably put
24 up with them, if there is a clause in there that
25 the public would help them pay. Because every

1 time there is a regulation, it costs the
2 individual hog farmer, beef farmer, whatever. And
3 I am just wondering what your thoughts are on
4 that? Because if there are any continued
5 regulations, should they be at the expense of the
6 farmer themselves?

7 MR. NICHOL: Well, I guess that
8 goes -- I could answer that by saying that it
9 depends on how far they go with these regulations.
10 If the public wants all of this clean water, which
11 we do, I don't think the farmers should be the
12 only ones shouldering the cost of that. Like I
13 say, it depends how far they are going to go.
14 There is not a lot of profit. And there a lot of
15 things that we are doing in the agriculture
16 industry out there, and I think you know that.
17 So if it gets much more costly than it already is,
18 then, yes, I think the public should help pay for
19 that.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have any idea, I
21 guess it would just be a guesstimate at this
22 point, as to how much the new phosphorus
23 regulation might add to your costs?

24 MR. NICHOL: No, I wouldn't. I would
25 have to probably guess at 15 percent or 20

1 percent.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: And we will probably
3 have to wait a year or two or three to figure that
4 out?

5 MR. NICHOL: What they come up as,
6 yes.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Nichol. Thank you for coming out this
9 afternoon.

10 MR. NICHOL: Thank you.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Jeff Blixhavn. Please
12 state your name for the record?

13 MR. BLIXHAVN: Jeff Blixhavn.

14 JEFF BLIXHAVN, having been sworn, presents as
15 follows:

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. And you may
17 proceed.

18 MR. BLIXHAVN: Good afternoon. As I
19 said, my name is Jeff Blixhavn. Our family built
20 a 5,200 head finishing barn in the summer of 2000,
21 as a complement to our grain farm, and as a
22 financial means of keeping my brother and myself
23 on the farm. My brother and I recently bought the
24 barn, a million and a half dollar facility, from
25 my father and uncle in September of last year.

1 Playing baseball in the fairgrounds
2 one evening in the summer of 2000, the wind was
3 blowing from the south, bringing smell off the
4 town lagoon, which is a mile away. And I heard
5 someone comment that: That smell was that damn
6 Blixhavn barn. A barn that's 17 miles southwest,
7 that was still under construction, and two months
8 away from the first pig arrival.

9 Since that time, I have had
10 discussions with people from Killarney, Winnipeg
11 and even Toronto about the hog industry, usually
12 defending it against misinformation. I have
13 always been open to any questions people have had
14 about the barn and have done my best to answer
15 them in an effort to promote understanding in as
16 many people as I can.

17 We have had to deal with constant
18 prejudice resulting from misinformation. I came
19 here today to outline the steps we go through each
20 year in order to continue the operation of our
21 barn and receive permission to spread manure on
22 our land.

23 We have two wells which supply the
24 barn. These are each tested annually for
25 nitrates, which could indicate groundwater

1 contamination.

2 Before spreading the manure from the
3 barn each fall, we must submit a Manure Management
4 Plan to Manitoba Conservation a minimum of 60 days
5 in advance of our expected spread start date.
6 This Plan must be filled out by the owner of the
7 barn, a professional agrologist, or a Certified
8 Crop Advisor, who has taken the proper manure
9 course. This Manure Management Plan includes a
10 list of the quarter sections that may be spread
11 on, owners of those quarters, and contact
12 information. Only those quarter sections listed
13 in the Plan may be spread on in that year. The
14 Plan also includes the intended crop for the next
15 year, expected yield, expected spread volume, the
16 name of the custom application company, if one is
17 used, estimated nitrogen content of the manure,
18 the number of animal units produced, and soil
19 classification. Soil samples are taken by an
20 impartial third party on all land intended for
21 manure application. These soil samples are then
22 sent to one of the only two labs in Manitoba that
23 do soil testing.

24 When we spread, our custom applicator
25 tests the manure for nitrogen and phosphorus while

1 agitating and spreading. He reviews all of the
2 soil test results, which he must have in his
3 possession the entire time he is spreading. He
4 also consults with us, as we often have him cut
5 back from the maximum allowable spread levels.
6 When applying the manure, he constantly adjusts
7 his application rate as the nutrient levels in the
8 manure, and soil, change.

9 After we have spread the manure, we
10 submit a spread confirmation to Manitoba
11 Conservation. This confirmation informs them of
12 the core sections we have spread on, with
13 accompanying maps, and soil test results. It
14 tells the nutrient level of the manure, spread
15 volume per field, and a list of all fields
16 submitted on the original plan but not spread on.
17 The volume, nutrient levels, and acres spread on
18 have to match up. Mathematically, they can't be
19 falsified.

20 This manure is a resource to our farm.
21 It is a valuable fertilizer. It doesn't make any
22 financial sense for us to over-apply this
23 fertilizer to our land. We want to adequately
24 fertilize as many acres as we can, with the manure
25 that we have, because every acre we don't get

1 covered is another acre we have to buy chemical
2 fertilizer for.

3 It also doesn't make environmental
4 sense for us to over-apply. The members of my
5 family have the three closest homes to our barn,
6 two of which are downstream from it. We are
7 following every regulation in place because we
8 know that any possible groundwater contamination
9 would affect us first. I hope this aids in the
10 understanding of the steps we, and all producers,
11 take to properly manage our farms, and the
12 resulting impacts on our communities.

13 Thank you.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
15 Mr. Blixhavn. How big is your grain farm?

16 MR. BLIXHAVN: It's 2,300-acres.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: 2,300. How many of you
18 does it take to operate both the finishing farm
19 and your grain farm?

20 MR. BLIXHAVN: There is four of us.
21 And we have a seasonal part-time, or a hired man,
22 just in the spring and fall.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: So four of you take
24 care of all of this operation, plus the one?

25 MR. BLIXHAVN: The barn, yeah, and the

1 2,300-acres and 200-acres of hay.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Were you and your
3 brother, did you go straight to the farm, or did
4 you work elsewhere in between or --

5 MR. BLIXHAVN: We both worked
6 elsewhere. My brother worked away from home for
7 probably five years. I went to university and got
8 my degree. And when I came back, I worked in a
9 couple of places in town here, but then was back
10 home. I worked at the company that we originally
11 had our barn with for two years managing
12 finishing, ten finishing sites. And then I
13 returned home to take over the barn with my
14 brother.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.
16 Wayne?

17 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. I'm interested in
18 the custom applicator. Obviously, that would be
19 part of the economic development in the area.
20 Like is it a custom applicator of the fertilizer,
21 of the manure?

22 MR. BLIXHAVN: Of the manure, yeah.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: Would that -- is there
24 more than one in the area or can one do all of the
25 barns in this area?

1 MR. BLIXHAVN: There is more than one.
2 There is one based in Boissevain, and he comes
3 into our area. Actually, the guy we hire lives in
4 Crystal City. And he comes and does 10 or 12
5 sites probably in the area.

6 MR. MOTHERAL: Would that be
7 considered full-time employment for that
8 applicator? I mean, obviously, you don't do it in
9 the winter time, but in the summertime?

10 MR. BLIXHAVN: No. He has got a
11 window that he can spread in. In the spring when
12 it thaws until guys are seeding, which is, you
13 know, starts the last week of April, the last
14 couple of weeks.

15 MR. MOTHERAL: And so you have about a
16 month and a half window, something like that?

17 MR. BLIXHAVN: And then you have a
18 month and a half in the fall. So he is very
19 seasonal. He has four or five employees, I think.
20 He keeps them busy in the summertime with other
21 things. But in the winter time, he is slow and he
22 can't do anything.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: You fill out your own
24 Manure Management Plan?

25 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes.

1 MR. MOTHERAL: And the owner is
2 certified to do that?

3 MR. BLIXHAVN: Yes.

4 MR. MOTHERAL: And just at the ending
5 here, I would like to add that when somebody said:
6 There is that damn smell from the Blixhavn barn,
7 does it make you grip the bat any better?

8 MR. BLIXHAVN: No.

9 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, that's all.

10 MR. YEE: Okay. Mr. Blixhavn, I
11 noticed that you mentioned in your presentation
12 that soil samples would be taken by an impartial
13 third party. Like, is it a consultant, or would
14 that be --

15 MR. BLIXHAVN: It is any one of the
16 local crop input companies. We use Patterson.
17 And then they come and take your plugs and tests
18 and then send them to the lab.

19 MR. YEE: Okay, thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for
21 coming out here this afternoon, Mr. Blixhavn.

22 MR. BLIXHAVN: Thanks.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: That brings us to the
24 end of the list of those who requested to speak
25 this afternoon. Is there anybody else in the

1 audience now who would like to speak, or anybody
2 who has signed up for this evening who would
3 rather go this afternoon? Well, if not, we will
4 take a break now. We will be here until 5:00,
5 which is our advertised time. And if anybody
6 shows up and wishes to make a presentation, or if
7 any of you change your minds and wish to make a
8 presentation, just let us know and we will
9 reconvene the panel. There is coffee and cookies
10 up here. I'm told the cookies are very good, so
11 come and enjoy them.

12 (PROCEEDINGS RECESSED AT 2:31 P.M.

13 AND RECONVENED AT 7:00 P.M.)

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Good evening, ladies
15 and gentlemen. Welcome back. We will start our
16 evening proceedings. We have about five or six
17 people who have indicated an interest in making a
18 presentation to us this evening. The first person
19 who was scheduled to make a presentation today is
20 Carol Ketner. She is here, but unable to make her
21 presentation, because she is totally without
22 voice. She has submitted a written presentation,
23 which we will accept as a written presentation.
24 There are a few copies of her presentation
25 available tonight. Otherwise, it will be posted

1 on our website probably next week, and you can
2 read it there.

3 Without putting words in her mouth, I
4 think it's fair to say that she takes a different
5 position than what we have heard this afternoon.
6 So thank you, Mrs. Ketner, for submitting a
7 written submission. And we wish you well, and
8 hope you get your voice back quickly.

9 Next on the agenda, then, is Mr. Bryon
10 Johnson. Come to the table up front, please,
11 Mr. Johnson. Would you please state your name for
12 the record?

13 MR. JOHNSON: Bryon Johnson.

14 BYRON JOHNSON, having been sworn, presents as
15 follows:

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may
17 proceed.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Good evening,
19 Mr. Chairman, panel members, and ladies and
20 gentlemen. My name is Bryon Johnson. And I
21 wanted to speak about a few of the things that the
22 hog industry is doing to protect our soil, our
23 water and the environment. Roberta and I own a
24 family farm between Killarney and Boissevain. We
25 raise cattle, grain and, for the last eight years,

1 we have been feeding hogs under contract with
2 Elite Swine, Inc.

3 B & R Feeders had the privilege of
4 delivering the first 50 hogs to the new Maple Leaf
5 plant in Brandon for their opening in August of
6 1999. And since then, we have shipped over a
7 quarter of a million hogs to that same plant.

8 There were a few scoping meetings held
9 before the regular public meetings, and I would
10 like to comment on some of the issues resulting
11 from those meetings.

12 Each year, all of our grain land is
13 soil tested with a G.P.S. system for more
14 consistent results. By using this system, the
15 samples are taken from almost exactly the same
16 spot on the field each year. All of the manure
17 that we apply is based on these 6 and 24-inch soil
18 tests. If the nutrient levels are too high in any
19 given field, we can't apply on that field. Each
20 year, we submit a Manure Management Plan to
21 Conservation. And out of eight years that we have
22 been applying manure, we have been audited three
23 times. As long as a producer follows the
24 guidelines set out, nutrient levels usually stay
25 the same as if we were using commercial

1 fertilizer.

2 We have two wells that provide water
3 for our house, our cattle, and we pipe the same
4 water half a mile to our hog barns. When we found
5 this water supply, the driller said that we could
6 irrigate with the volume of water that we have.
7 At the barns, we have a 35,000-gallon cistern and
8 a back-up generator so that the livestock won't be
9 out of water or power for any long period of time.
10 The generator fires up automatically if we lose
11 power for more than 15 seconds. So it doesn't
12 matter what the weather is doing outside, the
13 inside temperature never varies more than
14 10-degree.

15 Our water consumption is metered and
16 sent in to the Water Stewardship each month.
17 Morton Council had us install four monitoring
18 wells at our lagoon, and samples are taken
19 annually to check for seepage from the lagoon. In
20 eight years, there has been nothing that has shown
21 up in our monitoring wells.

22 All hog producers have to be validated
23 with the Quality Assurance Plan, which is a
24 program governed by the hog industry to assure
25 high quality pork is going to the market. Water

1 tests, feed tests, medication withdrawal times,
2 and protocol for broken needles are a few of the
3 things covered in this program. This program also
4 works with the producers to have traceability and
5 country of origin systems in place.

6 Killarney is a success story because
7 of the number of jobs created by the hog industry.
8 Between the three inland terminals, the feed-max
9 mill, which is running 24/7, the farrowing barns,
10 the nursery barns and the feeder barns, there have
11 been over 200 new families that have found
12 employment in the hog and grain industry in the
13 last eight years. Because of this new growth,
14 Co-op has built a modern new grocery store that
15 also employs close to 50 people. Killarney is one
16 of the few bright spots in rural Manitoba that has
17 seen major growth in the last ten years.

18 Even though our barns are in Morton
19 Municipality, we use a by-law put in place by the
20 Turtle Mountain Council, which was proactive in
21 odour control. Each year, Redhand Ltd. blows at
22 least six inches of barley straw on our lagoon
23 after our spring clean-out. They come back and do
24 touch-ups at least once in the summer to cover
25 areas opened up by high winds. Good managers are

1 able to keep the barns set up so they are clean
2 and dry, even in changeable weather. This reduces
3 the amount of odour being pushed out of the
4 ventilation system. We also constructed a
5 refrigerated shed for handling dead stock in the
6 hot summer months.

7 If all industries in Manitoba were as
8 proactive with water, odour and soils as the hog
9 industry, this province's environment would be in
10 very good hands. For one thing, we aren't
11 allowed, nor would we want, to build a hog barn
12 next to a river. Barn location is a big part of
13 being good neighbours and being environmentally
14 friendly.

15 I have been at several meetings where
16 opponents to the hog industry have accused
17 producers of contaminating wells, of causing
18 health problems, and of lowering land values. If
19 any of these things have actually happened, I
20 would challenge that person to produce a list
21 because, in most cases, there is no list. Why
22 would any livestock producer knowingly contaminate
23 his water supply and his soil, when clean water
24 and fertile soils are his livelihood.

25 So why are we here today? The hog

1 industry has been accused of putting one percent
2 of the nutrients into the Red River drainage
3 basin. Our site is over 160 miles away from the
4 Red River, and more than 200 miles away from Lake
5 Winnipeg. Because of this, we are having 17
6 meetings all over Manitoba.

7 The NDP caucus members have also
8 decided to put a pause on a billion dollar
9 industry that they, obviously, know next to
10 nothing about. This pause has already chased away
11 millions of dollars of investment and thousands of
12 jobs because of uncertainty in the industry. This
13 moratorium just fell out of the sky, with no time
14 limitations or prior consultation with the
15 industry. The Members of Parliament that called
16 for this pause are at least three generations
17 removed from having any ties to agriculture. And,
18 unfortunately, the moratorium has more to do with
19 politics than any amount of science or common
20 sense.

21 Watching David Suzuki reruns and
22 taking advice from the Farmer's Union and the
23 Winnipeg Humane Society doesn't really justify
24 putting a pause on a billion dollar industry.
25 Industry groups can make a lot of noise at these

1 meetings for their own reasons, but the people
2 that work at ground level are your best sources of
3 information. If the Conservation Department fails
4 to use advice from people in the industry, like
5 they did with the hog pause, this industry will
6 get bogged down with poor regulations that don't
7 help the environment or the industry.

8 I think that this whole review has
9 been brought on by a real bad case of human
10 denial. It's human nature not to want to take any
11 responsibility when it comes to polluting our
12 rivers and lakes. The hog industry is an easy
13 target. And if I wasn't involved in it, like I
14 am, it would be really easy to point a finger at
15 this industry and ignore the real problem. There
16 are between 1.2 and 1.5 million people that live
17 within 15 miles of the Red River, upstream from
18 Lake Winnipeg, and several thousand cottages on
19 that lake. There isn't an intensive livestock
20 operation in the world that produces even one
21 percent of the amount of waste produced by that
22 number of people.

23 On top of human waste, there are
24 thousands of industries, some clean and some very
25 dirty. I have no idea how many livestock

1 operations there are on either side of the
2 Canada/U.S. border that are near the Red River,
3 but I'm guessing that livestock are out-numbered
4 by people by at least 5,000 to one. Livestock
5 waste isn't channeled into the river, whereas
6 human waste can be piped from at least 15 miles on
7 each side of the river.

8 If we have the capability of detecting
9 one percent of hog waste, why don't we have the
10 percentage of human waste on the same slide, and
11 why do we have agriculture and hog waste in a
12 different category? Common sense would tell me
13 that human waste is responsible for between 80 and
14 90 percent of the nutrients that end up in Lake
15 Winnipeg.

16 Today we are putting one percent of
17 the problem under a magnifying glass, as we sit
18 here and watch the other 99 percent slowly kill
19 Lake Winnipeg. A smart businessman would start at
20 the top of the list with the biggest polluters and
21 work down.

22 Our Provincial Government has put on
23 this inquiry, for the benefit of a few interest
24 groups, while over 34,000 desperate Crocus Fund
25 investors are left in the dark, begging for an

1 inquiry.

2 I told myself that I would try to keep
3 this presentation positive. But as I wrote this
4 presentation, I realized that I really don't agree
5 with any of the ag policy that has been put in
6 place since this government came to power. The
7 pause in the hog industry was implemented by a
8 group of caucus members that have never been close
9 to a hog barn and have no idea that life actually
10 does exist outside of the perimeter. Everything
11 that I said in this presentation was probably
12 already said by Manitoba Pork Council when they
13 announced these meetings in -- when they opened
14 these meetings in Winnipeg with a two-hour
15 presentation. Having between 400 and 500 hours of
16 meetings all over rural Manitoba is similar to
17 Manitoba's CWB vote, another waste of taxpayers'
18 money. If the City of Winnipeg is responsible for
19 over ten times as many nutrients as the hog
20 industry, is this Provincial Government going to
21 have 4,000 hours of meetings in the city, or might
22 that offend some other potential voters? This
23 Provincial Government has managed to butcher
24 everything that it touches that relates to
25 agriculture. Strong councils and strong

1 governments stand up for agriculture, and don't
2 waste a lot of time and money on meaningless
3 inquiries. I consider this whole exercise a
4 complete waste of my time and yours.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

6 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes, Mr. Johnson, as
7 you went on and on, you got a little bit more and
8 more and more -- it is a presentation. Obviously,
9 you are not pleased with what the government is
10 doing, but we are not part of that.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

12 MR. MOTHERAL: We were asked to do
13 this review. So when you mention that the
14 producer follows the guidelines typed out and
15 nutrient levels, et cetera, et cetera. Do you
16 think those are too onerous to the hog industry,
17 some of the regulations that are in place? And if
18 there were more, now I'm asking you a question, do
19 you think the industry can absorb any more
20 regulations, or do you think that if they have to
21 absorb any more, should they be financially helped
22 by the government? Did you understand my
23 question? I maybe didn't say it very well.

24 MR. JOHNSON: Not really.

25 MR. MOTHERAL: Not really. If there

1 were any more regulations, putting a hypothetical,
2 if there were more regulations, on top of the many
3 that there already are in the hog industry, we
4 have heard from other areas that they can't afford
5 it, because regulations cost us money, it costs
6 the industry money, the individual enterprises.
7 Do you feel as though there should be government
8 assistance if there is any more regulations,
9 financial assistance?

10 MR. JOHNSON: Well, there are some
11 regulations that just won't make any fiscal common
12 sense or, like, technology is wonderful if you can
13 afford it. It's just like anything else in
14 agriculture, sometimes new technology is out of
15 the reach. It might be there, it might be good
16 technology, but it doesn't make any sense
17 financially.

18 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. Another
19 question, is the operation is in the R.M. of
20 Morton, right, did you say?

21 MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

22 MR. MOTHERAL: Now, with the two
23 municipalities, are they quite compatible in their
24 development plans, as far as the livestock
25 industry?

1 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. There is a few of
2 them here tonight. And I think their regulations
3 are very similar. Turtle Mountain has got more
4 barns than Morden. But I think there are -- there
5 are some areas, like, if you don't want to put
6 barns up close to parks, and things like that, and
7 the location of barns is a big part of being
8 friendly with your neighbours, I guess.

9 MR. MOTHERAL: I am just saying that
10 because there are many municipalities, of course,
11 in Manitoba, neighbouring municipalities, that are
12 not really that compatible in some of their
13 development plans. And it's probably advantageous
14 in this industry if there are -- if there is
15 compatibility in an area. And, obviously, there
16 is here. Your answer is pretty well, yes, then, I
17 would think.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Well, I mean Turtle
19 Mountain borders with three other municipalities.
20 And I think we are all working with the same
21 regulations, so it would be pretty hard not to be
22 compatible.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, that's it. Thank
24 you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

1 MR. YEE: Yes. Mr. Johnson, you've
2 indicated in your presentation that the pause has
3 chased away millions of dollars of investment and
4 thousands of jobs. Whereabouts did you get these
5 statistics?

6 MR. JOHNSON: Well, I will just give
7 you one example, and that is the Olymel Plant in
8 Winnipeg. This pause has chased away millions of
9 dollars of investment and over 1,000 jobs right
10 there.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, there is no
12 evidence that the pause has caused Olymel to pull
13 out.

14 MR. JOHNSON: Well, maybe not. But, I
15 mean, if I was an investor, thinking about
16 investing in a plant like that, and I was looking
17 at a pause. Actually, there has been people that
18 have approached us lately, and they are thinking
19 about building a farrowing barn. And if this
20 pause isn't off right away, they are going to be
21 looking at either North Dakota or Saskatchewan.
22 You can't sit and wait for a government to make up
23 its mind.

24 MR. YEE: Mr. Johnson, just more of a
25 point of clarification. Also in your

1 presentation, you noted that if the Conservation
2 Department fails to use the advice of people in
3 the industry, like they did with the hog pause,
4 this industry will get bogged down with poor
5 regulations that don't help the environment or the
6 industry. Are you referring to existing
7 regulations?

8 MR. JOHNSON: No. I'm referring to
9 the fact that the pause was put on, and it just
10 sort of fell out of the sky. There was no
11 consultation with the industry. I mean, I was at
12 a meeting, a review meeting, the afternoon that it
13 came on. And even the people in the technical
14 review had no idea that was coming. It just fell
15 out of the sky.

16 MR. YEE: Well, I am just trying to
17 understand what you mean by resulting in poor
18 regulations that don't help the environment or
19 industry?

20 MR. JOHNSON: What?

21 MR. YEE: Like, I don't understand how
22 the pause will -- are you saying because of the
23 pause, as a result of the pause, there will be
24 poor regulations that aren't going to help the
25 environment or industry?

1 MR. JOHNSON: Well, like, I think it's
2 going to come down to the point that there is
3 going to be regulations because of this pause,
4 just to justify the fact that we sat and didn't
5 build any barns for a year. And I would be very
6 suspicious if we don't have -- I guess I just have
7 a gut feeling that I don't like what's coming
8 around the corner with this pause. Because when
9 you take a year off from building barns,
10 government is almost going to have to justify what
11 they have done. And there has got to be new
12 regulations. I don't think there is any doubt
13 about that. And I am guessing, from what I have
14 seen of from this government, that they are
15 probably going to be poor regulations.

16 MR. YEE: Okay, thank you.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Okay.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Next, Mr. Tim Hofer.

20 Please state your name for the record?

21 MR. T. HOFER: Tim Hofer.

22 TIM HOFER, having been sworn, presents as follows:

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hofer,
24 go ahead.

25 MR. T. HOFER: Good evening, ladies

1 and gentlemen. My name is Tim Hofer. I am a
2 member of the Willowcreek Hutterite Colony. I am
3 also the hog production manager for the colony.

4 At this time, I would like to thank
5 you for the opportunity to present my comments to
6 you.

7 Willowcreek Colony was begun in 1972,
8 and today is a community of 27 families, with a
9 total of 140 residents. Until recently, the
10 colony relied solely on agriculture operations for
11 its income. These operations include grain
12 farming, the production of eggs, milk and beef,
13 and the production of hogs. And to offset some of
14 the reduction in farm income in recent years, we
15 have branched out into heavy trailer
16 manufacturing.

17 Agriculture, however, as it was for
18 our forefathers is the basis of our existence.

19 With 27 families relying on
20 agriculture, I think it is safe to say that we are
21 the modern family farm.

22 At this time, I would like to tell you
23 some of the efforts Willowcreek Colony goes to
24 regarding environment and manure management.

25 Our field manager looks after the

1 Manure Management Plan. Every year, we hire an
2 agronomist to take soil samples, in order to
3 accurately calculate the soil nutrient
4 requirements for the next year's crop. We do this
5 for every field, every year.

6 After collecting 12 to 16 soil samples
7 per field, the resulting nutrient field
8 calculations are used to control manure
9 application. And this is done using the
10 agronomist's maps, in conjunction with a GPS
11 location system, to control the manure application
12 rate and location. This system allows the precise
13 amount of manure to be placed in the correct
14 position in the field. We, therefore, get the
15 precise amount of phosphate and other nutrients
16 per application.

17 We feel so strongly about
18 accomplishing this task properly that, even though
19 we have our own manure injection equipment, we
20 choose to hire an outside expert to do the actual
21 injection. This company is Red Hand Manure
22 Injecting, a company that's a leader in manure
23 application.

24 Not only does Red Hand do our work,
25 they maintain computerized records and field

1 application maps. This information is available
2 to any interested party.

3 To further control the nutrient
4 content of the manure, we include, in the formula
5 for all of our feed rations, a product called
6 phytase. This ingredient helps the livestock
7 utilize the phosphate in the grains. This enables
8 us to significantly reduce the additional
9 phosphate, and is normally blended into the
10 rations.

11 We also spend thousands of dollars a
12 year on a feed additive called Proaid, that has no
13 other function than to reduce the odour in the
14 manure.

15 Further, we maintain a barley straw
16 cover on our lagoon to keep the odour down. The
17 particular use of barley straw is a very efficient
18 method to minimize odour.

19 I should also remind you that not only
20 are we concerned about our fields and the
21 environment, we are concerned about water quality.
22 After all, remember that all of the water we drink
23 comes from our own wells.

24 While the decision by the Government
25 of Manitoba to put a moratorium on building of

1 barns appears to have been motivated by
2 environmental issues, it will have an unintended
3 side effect for the Hutterites. This is causing
4 us grave concerns.

5 Willowcreek's population has grown in
6 the last 35 years to a point where we are starting
7 to plan for a new farm.

8 Currently, we are raising weaned pigs,
9 called isoweans, and sending them south to be
10 finished in the U.S.A. Our long-term plan was to
11 build finishing barns on the new farm, and send
12 our isoweans to them. This would allow us to take
13 advantage of the profit to be made from the whole
14 hog production cycle.

15 The new finishing hog barns, along
16 with the other farm operations, would generate an
17 income required to sustain the new farm.
18 Unfortunately, as you know, cropping operations,
19 by themselves, are not profitable enough to
20 sustain anything. The hog barns are needed to
21 ensure the viability of the new farm.

22 Without the barns, our children have
23 little future, and no guarantee of jobs to keep
24 our communities alive and growing.

25 For 400 years, agriculture has

1 sustained the Hutterite way of life. It is a
2 business our grandfathers and fathers have taught
3 us. We are hoping to pass it on to our children,
4 but it is getting increasingly difficult to
5 sustain this way of life. This could lead to a
6 very bleak future for our descendants.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to make
8 this presentation.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hofer.
10 How large is your farm?

11 MR. T. HOFER: Acre-wise?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Acre-wise, hog-wise?

13 MR. T. HOFER: 4,500-acres, 2,400 sow
14 isowean, 6,000 chickens.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: 2,400?

16 MR. T. HOFER: 2,400 sow isowean.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Willowcreek Colony is
18 in this area?

19 MR. T. HOFER: It is in Roblin
20 Municipality, right beside Turtle Mountain
21 Municipality.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. And how
23 soon were you planning or hoping to start the new
24 farm?

25 MR. T. HOFER: Probably in the next

1 five years, if all goes well.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Have you identified an
3 area for it?

4 MR. T. HOFER: Not yet.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: So it's definitely in
6 the plans, but it's not --

7 MR. T. HOFER: We have invested the
8 money in the hogs in the sow barns for this
9 already.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Wayne?

11 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes, thank you.
12 Mr. Hofer, you have mentioned here in your
13 presentation that you do have your own actual
14 injection equipment, although you do hire somebody
15 else to do it. Does that mean in the past you did
16 do it yourselves?

17 MR. T. HOFER: We did. We did at one
18 time.

19 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. We have heard,
20 previous to today, that there are some excellent
21 people here that do injections.

22 MR. T. HOFER: Yes.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: That do make a business
24 of it. Has this been -- is this a requirement of
25 the municipality? I know that they don't -- I

1 don't think they have that in the new Planning
2 Act.

3 MR. T. HOFER: To inject or to hire
4 somebody, you mean?

5 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes, okay.

6 MR. T. HOFER: It is not a requirement
7 to hire somebody. But we did it because of the
8 records. And it's so much easier running a Manure
9 Management Plan. And it is done way better to
10 protect our fields.

11 MR. MOTHERAL: And do you think that
12 is probably -- well, in the future, that most
13 operations should be using, more or less, a
14 certified injector?

15 MR. T. HOFER: Not necessarily, but
16 for us it works.

17 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, that's all I
18 have.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Just to follow up on
20 that, what are the economies of scale? How big an
21 operation does one have to have to be able to
22 reasonably afford to hire somebody to do this
23 spreading?

24 MR. T. HOFER: I guess that's a good
25 question. It depends.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I guess that a small
2 operation probably couldn't afford that?

3 MR. T. HOFER: A small operation
4 couldn't afford it. Well, it is cheaper to hire
5 somebody if you're small.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Than to have
7 your own equipment, of course, yes. Thank you.
8 Edwin?

9 MR. YEE: Oh, just one question.
10 Mr. Hofer, in terms of your spread fields, are
11 they all owned by the colony or do you spread on
12 other fields?

13 MR. T. HOFER: It is all owned by us.
14 But some people have bought manure from us as
15 fertilizer, our neighbours.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hofer,
17 for coming out this evening.

18 MR. T. HOFER: Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Next is Andy Gross.
20 Please state your name for the record?

21 MR. GROSS: Andy Gross.

22 ANDY GROSS, having been sworn, presents as
23 follows:

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Go ahead.

25 MR. GROSS: Good evening, ladies and

1 gentlemen. I would just like to make a few
2 comments regarding this moratorium on behalf of
3 Mayfair Colony. I'm the hog manager at Mayfair
4 Colony, and I'm honoured to present this for our
5 colony tonight.

6 This moratorium on hog barns is being
7 examined because the general public feels that hog
8 barns are responsible for the pollution in Lake
9 Winnipeg, and the general destruction of our
10 environment. Some people feel that this type of
11 production is not sustainable and that all hog
12 production facilities should be closed down.

13 I think that ignorance breeds fear.
14 Many citizens of Manitoba are no longer in touch
15 with agriculture and primary food production.
16 They have been misinformed by extreme groups who
17 have a different agenda. It is no surprise to us
18 that agriculture no longer has the respect from
19 locals due to world trade and cheap food policies.
20 The average family living in the city has no idea
21 where their food comes from or what sort of
22 agriculture practices were used to produce that
23 food.

24 Tonight, I want to share some of our
25 practices and illustrate how we are taking

1 responsibility for our farms and being good
2 stewards of the land. I hope that we can pass
3 this information along to those less fortunate,
4 who do not have a direct link to the agriculture
5 industry, and who learn only by listening to
6 activists on the radio.

7 In our barns, we run state of the art
8 ventilation systems. This includes sprinklers in
9 farrowing rooms to cool sows in summer. A
10 coal-fired stocker is used for extra heating in
11 cold months to enable maximum ventilation with
12 fresh air. As for our hog water supplies, we
13 include water bowls to reduce water wastage.
14 Standard water nipples waste 30 to 60 percent of
15 water, as determined by Prairie Swine Center in
16 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

17 As for feed and nutrition purposes,
18 Mayfair uses an enzyme in the feed called phytase.
19 This enzyme increases the availability of
20 phosphorus in the ingredients, grains and proteins
21 of plant origin in the diet, so that the pigs can
22 utilize more of this natural source of phosphorus.
23 This means there is less synthetic phosphorus,
24 mono-dicalcium phosphate, that needs to be added
25 to the diet. It also means that there is less

1 phosphorus that is excreted into the manure and
2 into the environment. And the phytase also
3 increases utilization of other minerals, such as
4 calcium.

5 Mayfair uses organic trace minerals.
6 These minerals are more available to the pig,
7 compared to using standard inorganic minerals.
8 Because of this increase in utilization, there are
9 less minerals excreted in the manure and,
10 therefore, into the environment.

11 Mayfair uses diets that are "balanced"
12 for the pig. This means that all of the key
13 nutrients are in the right form, and in the right
14 amount, so that the pigs can be as efficient as
15 possible in utilizing the ingredients that are
16 available for consumption. In other words, this
17 method of feed formulation, feed efficiency,
18 reducing the waste of nutrients that get passed
19 through into the environment. An example of this
20 is making sure the diets are balanced, not only
21 for protein, but also for individual amino acids
22 necessary for protein deposition.

23 Mayfair uses by-products as
24 ingredients. Example of this are wheat midds,
25 which come from the flower industry, and soybean

1 meal and canola meal, which come from the oilseed
2 industry, where these crops are crushed for the
3 oil content.

4 Mayfair uses a professional
5 nutritionist on a regular basis to ensure that
6 their diets are properly balanced and formulated
7 to meet the daily needs of our pigs.

8 As for biosecurity into our barns, we
9 go to great lengths to ensure good biosecurity in
10 our barns. This isn't just so that consumers get
11 drug-free meat, but also because we don't want
12 sickly pigs. We keep our pigs healthy by reducing
13 the amount of disease that could infect them.
14 Every time we enter the barn, we must shower in
15 and change our clothes. No dogs, cats or birds
16 are allowed in the barns.

17 Rooms are constantly washed and
18 disinfected, and all feed spills are cleaned up.
19 Reducing the use of antibiotics costs is good for
20 us, and also good for the meat industry.

21 As for staff and training, we make
22 every effort to keep our barn staff well trained.
23 Manitoba is a leader in training in the pork
24 industry. And the pork industry offers more
25 training than any area of primary production in

1 agriculture.

2 Every worker in our barn is a
3 certified swine technician, as issued by
4 Assiniboine Community College. Staff also has
5 been trained in H2S awareness, as well as CPR.

6 We use gas monitors throughout the
7 barns to detect harmful gas levels. This helps us
8 show that our good husbandry practices do result
9 in clean air for staff and livestock. Our truck
10 drivers have been trained and certified on the
11 Code of Practice for handling and transporting
12 pigs.

13 On our manure handling, soil tests are
14 annually done by our local agronomist. Based on
15 soil results, a Manure Management Plan is filled
16 out and filed with Manitoba Conservation. We have
17 invested heavily into equipment used to apply
18 manure appropriately. This involves an injection
19 system using a GPS system, so there is no overlap,
20 and manure is not overapplied. Manure is tested
21 throughout the application period using a Nova
22 meter.

23 Currently, we are covering the lagoon
24 with straw, but are seriously considering putting
25 a cover on it. This can lead to the option of

1 producing a renewable form of energy. In other
2 provinces, this type of energy is being bought
3 from the farmers. That is good for us and our
4 neighbours.

5 There is a natural process in nature
6 known as the circle of life. Anyone growing up on
7 a farm will be familiar with this process.
8 Basically, every species has its place in nature,
9 and if that balance gets disrupted, the entire
10 ecosystem is out of balance. Agriculture follows
11 the same principles. As good stewards of the
12 land, in the business of primary food production,
13 we must also be careful not to disrupt this
14 balance, or we will suffer losses.

15 We grow grain. Some is used for
16 bread-making, some for beer production or oil
17 production. Some grain is considered value-added,
18 as it is used in meat production. The by-products
19 from these industries need to be returned to the
20 land to act as fertilizers, increasing the organic
21 matter.

22 Pigs are the link in this process.
23 Pigs are an essential part to our circle of life.
24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Gross.

1 Can you tell me a little bit about your colony,
2 just where is it?

3 MR. GROSS: It is seven miles straight
4 west of Lena, Manitoba. We farm 10,000-acres.
5 And we just have a few milk cows and chickens for
6 our own use. Our main source of livelihood is
7 hogs and farming.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: How big is your hog
9 operation?

10 MR. GROSS: We have 1,200 sows, farrow
11 to finish, and we are breeding stock producers.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: I was interested in
13 your comment, on the second last page, about the
14 option to produce a renewable form of energy. You
15 say you are:

16 "...seriously considering putting a
17 cover on it. This can lead to the
18 option of producing a renewable form
19 of energy."

20 Can you just tell us a little bit about what that
21 is?

22 MR. GROSS: There is a new form of
23 energy, which needs some work done on it yet,
24 which is in the form of biogas. And out in
25 Alberta, that's starting to take off.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: And what do you produce
2 the biogas from, from the manure?

3 MR. GROSS: Yes.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: From the dried part, or
5 the liquid part, or just the mix of it?

6 MR. GROSS: It's the liquid part of
7 it. And you have to have a better coverage than
8 straw.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And then does it
10 require some machinery to create the biogas?

11 MR. GROSS: Yes, which can be used as
12 a heat source.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: And this is still in
14 the early stages of being developed?

15 MR. GROSS: We know of a few farms who
16 have it. But, basically, there is more
17 development work to it yet.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.
19 Wayne?

20 MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman. When you mention how the link of
22 agriculture is getting lost, I know exactly what
23 you're -- what you're speaking of, with the
24 children not knowing, or the general public not
25 knowing where food comes from, et cetera. But

1 this is -- there was an -- and I don't know, maybe
2 the public here can help me. But there was a
3 forum a number of years ago, Agriculture in the
4 Classroom. Does that still happen?

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

6 MR. MOTHERAL: That's still going on,
7 is it? Because there is a concern that it helps
8 all of agriculture if everybody knows what's going
9 on. And that's, obviously, in the hog industry
10 it's the same thing. It's a general education of
11 the public. Also Keystone Agriculture Producers,
12 I think, are continually trying to promote that to
13 people. So there are things going on, on a
14 positive scale. Keystone are trying to educate
15 people on where food comes from and why we have
16 this wonderful food that we take for granted in
17 the province.

18 On one issue on your farm, you say you
19 use alarms, gas monitors, throughout our barns.
20 This is just out of curiosity, has one ever gone
21 off? Do you know of any instance where gas
22 monitors go off?

23 MR. GROSS: Yes.

24 MR. MOTHERAL: So the alarms do work.
25 And when the alarm does that, does that mean get

1 out of the barn?

2 MR. GROSS: No. We took this course
3 that taught us quite a lot about draining pigs, et
4 cetera. So we had to change those practices, like
5 do it on a more timely fashion, and be more aware
6 of what can happen, like, how these was gases
7 work. So we just had to change our way of doing
8 it a little bit. But these gases, you can work
9 for three hours in ten parts per million and then
10 at twelve parts per million you can only work, et
11 cetera, or so and so long. And as the gas per
12 parts per million rises, you're required to work
13 less time with it. And at one point, when your
14 alarm goes in high alarm, then you are to exit the
15 building.

16 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. It's interesting
17 to know. Because, I mean, I have fire alarms and
18 smoke alarms, and I hope they never go off.

19 MR. GROSS: Well, these are gas
20 monitor alarms.

21 MR. MOTHERAL: No, I realize that.
22 That's interesting. That's the first time I've
23 heard that, so that's great. That's all I have,
24 thanks.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Just to follow on

1 Wayne's question, and I don't know if you can
2 answer this, but somebody indicated that this
3 Agriculture in the Schools Program, I mean,
4 somebody indicated it is still going on. But is
5 it going on in rural schools or in city schools
6 where it's really needed? Does anybody know?

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's the city, I
8 think.

9 MR. R. HOFER: They presented in
10 Brandon at one of their fairs.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thanks. Edwin,
12 any questions for Mr. Gross?

13 MR. YEE: Oh, yes, I have a couple of
14 questions, Mr. Gross. One of them relating to you
15 state in your presentation that you use state of
16 the art ventilation systems. Does that include
17 biofilters?

18 MR. GROSS: No, it doesn't.

19 MR. YEE: Are there any steps that you
20 take in the operation of your barns to control
21 odours?

22 MR. GROSS: Yes. Actually, I forgot
23 to mention that we are doing -- we are in the
24 experimental stages with that through Banner Farm
25 Supply.

1 MR. YEE: What specific technologies
2 are you looking at, or what are you trying to do
3 to reduce the odours?

4 MR. GROSS: There is different --
5 different companies have different claims on what
6 it does for the odour. So you, basically, pick
7 and choose what areas that you would like to
8 improve on with your manure system. And then you
9 pick that company or their product and work with
10 them.

11 MR. YEE: And just another question I
12 have, Mr. Gross, is you also mentioned that the
13 rooms are constantly washed and disinfected. I
14 was just wondering what type of disinfectant was
15 used?

16 MR. GROSS: Well, nothing with
17 formaldehyde in it, or that's dangerous to the
18 humans, to the lungs of the humans and the pigs.
19 Mind you, there is no pigs in there at that time.
20 That's when the rooms are empty and get washed
21 with disinfected and have down-time to prepare for
22 the next batch of sows, pigs, whatever the case
23 may be.

24 MR. YEE: So it would be a chemical
25 disinfectant?

1 MR. GROSS: A very user-friendly one,
2 yes, just to help fight potential disease
3 outbreaks.

4 MR. YEE: Okay, thank you.

5 MR. MOTHERAL: Just one more question,
6 Mr. Hofer. I'm sorry, Mr. Gross. I think I
7 called you Hofer. In your presentation you say:

8 "Manure is tested throughout the
9 application period using a Nova
10 meter."

11 What does that test? Does that test the
12 concentration of the nitrogen or phosphorus that's
13 going in, or the quantity or quality? What does
14 that do?

15 MR. GROSS: It tests the concentration
16 of your nitrogen.

17 MR. MOTHERAL: And that's when it's
18 being injected? That's something that's happening
19 all the time?

20 MR. GROSS: Yes.

21 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
23 Mr. Gross.

24 MR. GROSS: Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Lloyd Leganchuk. Would

1 you please state your name for the record?

2 MR. LEGANCHUK: Actually, Mr.
3 Chairman, my name is David Stead. I am
4 representing the R.M. of Morton, who can't make
5 it.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And what was
7 your name again?

8 MR. STEAD: David Stead, S-T-E-A-D.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: David Stead?

10 MR. STEAD: Yes.

11 DAVID STEAD, having been sworn, presents as
12 follows:

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may
14 proceed.

15 MR. STEAD: Thank you. Well, good
16 evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for
17 giving me the opportunity, on behalf of my
18 municipality, the R.M. of Morton, to make a
19 presentation to the Commission concerning the Hog
20 Production Industry Review.

21 I find it ironic that the very
22 industry the Manitoba Government spent
23 considerable dollars promoting in our Province is
24 the very industry that you have placed microscopic
25 lenses on and are doing everything in your power

1 to destroy it. It was your wish that the Province
2 of Manitoba open its arms to development of this
3 industry.

4 We have a serious concern and, as a
5 Manitobans, I would say we must deal with it,
6 because our kids expect us to be good stewards of
7 the land and, as such, we have a responsibility
8 that we leave the environment in at least the same
9 state that we entered it.

10 My friends, you have narrowed the
11 discussion to hogs. This is doing very little in
12 addressing all of the other components that are
13 creating the nutrient and phosphate load on to
14 Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg and other lakes
15 and streams. We must consider the many other
16 pollutants that are creating the problem. We must
17 remember that the people of Winnipeg are
18 responsible for a lot of the nutrient loading that
19 we have seen. What is being done about this? We
20 also know that all of the other components have
21 some effect on the environment. The fertilizer
22 operation that provides the nutrients and
23 phosphate loading on crop land, are they not also
24 contributing to the nutrient and phosphate
25 loading?

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stead, can you slow
2 down so that our reporter can keep up?

3 MR. STEAD: Okay. Do we not have to
4 consider all animal waste units contributing to
5 the problem? So what am I talking about is all of
6 the facets of agriculture.

7 The agricultural industry has done its
8 share in working to solve their own problems. And
9 I would say, as a result of the year of scrutiny,
10 are further ahead of the cities and cottage
11 developments in controlling nutrient loads that
12 they are generating. The simple fact is that the
13 family will never overload his or her land with
14 nutrients and phosphate because it would mean
15 economic suicide. The land would be useless to
16 him. Is agriculture not the engine that provides
17 the ingredients to economic dollars that allows
18 our cities to blossom? I do think so.

19 I would like to make four points that
20 I really feel need to be addressed. The Province
21 is telling us that we must complete a new
22 development plan by the end of this year, and so
23 we are trying to do this. However, a component of
24 this plan requires us to address Intensive
25 Livestock Operations. This component, unless

1 resolved quickly, will not be addressed. The
2 development plan and related plans will need to be
3 redone.

4 The fact is that we currently have an
5 application before us that involves our
6 development plan. The application was made
7 February 2006, and the application cannot proceed
8 because of the moratorium on hogs right now.

9 It is a fact that today half of
10 agricultural land is covered by an environmental
11 plan. Could somebody show me the environmental
12 plan that the City of Winnipeg operates under? Do
13 they not produce any of it? Do they even have a
14 plan that can demonstrate to me that they are
15 managing their waste, water and sludge properly?

16 The hog industry must have this review
17 resolved as quickly as possible, as it is
18 imperative that we continue to send out the
19 message that we are "open for business". Do not
20 slam the door on this industry because nobody will
21 invest in our Province in the future. We must
22 build confidence back into the hog industry, or
23 any other industry, for that matter.

24 The hog industry collective is only
25 one percent of the problem of nutrients and

1 phosphates loading on Lake Winnipeg. In fact, I
2 would venture to say that the ducks and geese that
3 flourish around the lakes are more of a direct
4 contributor to the problem than that of the hog
5 industry. Remember, the hog industry is already
6 very closely monitored and has to follow strict
7 regulations to operate under.

8 In conclusion, I would like to point
9 out that, as I was preparing this presentation, I
10 pulled out different reports generated by the
11 Manitoba Clean Environment Commission. The
12 reports are:

13 1. Proposal concerning Surface Water
14 Quality Objectives and Stream Classification for
15 the Province of Manitoba - Report submitted May 4,
16 1978.

17 2. Proposed Classification of
18 Manitoba Surface Water, Red River Principal
19 Watershed Division - August 1980.

20 I would like these reports to become
21 part of my submission with you concerning the
22 topic we are discussing today. It appears that
23 all of this has been talked about before, and
24 before, and before. Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Stead.

1 Wayne?

2 MR. MOTHERAL: I have one comment.
3 And I understand, coming from a municipal
4 perspective on the new Planning Act with the
5 opportunity, I guess you could say, for council
6 for a municipality to come up with their own
7 livestock operation policy, operating policy. It
8 must be very frustrating to municipalities,
9 because we've heard that they are reluctant to go
10 ahead with it because things could change because
11 of this review.

12 MR. STEAD: Yes.

13 MR. MOTHERAL: And we know that. We
14 have been told that before. And we understand
15 that very much so. So I'm hoping that this can be
16 done in a speedy manner, myself.

17 MR. STEAD: Yes, I am, too, yeah.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

19 MR. YEE: I probably have more of a
20 comment than I do a question for you, Mr. Stead.
21 But in terms of you mentioned this, and I have
22 heard this from other presenters, about the
23 comparison between agriculture, the agricultural
24 industry doing a better job than the City of
25 Winnipeg. But in the context of this, are you

1 speaking of just using nutrients to fertilize
2 lawns in the city versus the fertilizer used in
3 the agricultural industry, or are you saying that
4 in terms of the city managing all of its sources
5 of phosphorus into the water, such as car washes
6 and soaps going into municipal effluence?

7 MR. STEAD: Well, it all contributes.
8 I mean, how many cottages around lakes let their
9 gray water into the lakes? And the shampoos that
10 they use are more toxic than hog manure. And we
11 know that that goes on. And I was told by a
12 Government Minister that that's a tough problem to
13 solve. Well, it's not. Just give them 12 months
14 to put a proper tank in there. And if they don't,
15 just shut them down. They will do it.

16 These reports I saw today, I only saw
17 them today. And I haven't had time to read them,
18 but I looked down the page, and it is in 1980
19 about the pollutants that go into the river. Now,
20 I am not familiar with the term BOD. Do you know
21 what a BOD is?

22 MR. YEE: Biological oxygen demand.

23 MR. STEAD: Okay. So is that a bad
24 thing when that goes into the river?

25 MR. YEE: Yes, because it takes away

1 the oxygen from the aquatic environment and the
2 fish can't survive.

3 MR. STEAD: Okay. Well, in 1980
4 Killarney were producing 3,700 kgs of these over
5 five years. And the City of Winnipeg south end,
6 that's just the south end, was producing 9,600,000
7 of them. So even if you compare it on a
8 person-for-person basis, there are far more BODs
9 going into that river than was going into the
10 river in Killarney. And that's what really ticks
11 farmers off is because they are being blamed for
12 something they have not really created, which is,
13 obviously, a political reason that this inquiry is
14 going on.

15 MR. YEE: Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Stead.
17 Can we get a copy of your written submission?

18 MR. STEAD: Yes, certainly you can,
19 yes. Thank you very much.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.
21 Robert Hofer. Please state your name for the
22 record?

23 MR. R. HOFER: Robert Hofer.

24 ROBERT HOFER, having been sworn, presents as
25 follows:

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, and please
2 proceed.

3 MR. R. HOFER: Good evening, members
4 of the Clean Environment Commission.

5 Ladies and gentlemen, my name is
6 Robert Hofer, manager of the Wellwood Hutterite
7 Colony, which is located between the communities
8 of Dunrea and Ninette. All three communities
9 reside in the R.M. of Riverside.

10 Presently, there are 83 members and 18
11 families in living in our community. Our primary
12 revenue source is generated from several
13 agricultural-based operations.

14 Land base. Wellwood Colony Farms
15 consists of 11,517-acres, of which 3,600 are
16 rented. The colony crops grown are oilseeds,
17 cereal grains and forages. The products are
18 mostly used for the colony's livestock
19 enterprises. We also have diversified our grain
20 handling system to add value by cleaning barley
21 and oats for the livestock industry. Remember,
22 the crow rate is gone.

23 At Wellwood Colony, we presently
24 operate a 900 sow, farrow to finish, swine herd.
25 We also market high health swine genetics to other

1 producers. Remember, the crow rate is gone.

2 The present moratorium. We also feel
3 the present moratorium on the hog industry will
4 affect our revenue, and do us farmers more harm
5 than good.

6 We also operate a 260 cow and calf
7 operation, and a small feed lot where we finish
8 50 percent of our yearly calf crop. Remember,
9 ladies and gentlemen, the crow is gone.

10 Nutrient management. At Wellwood
11 Colony, environmentally sound agricultural
12 practices are in place. Larry Penner, certified
13 agronomist for Agri Trend Agrology Ltd., based out
14 of Red Deer, Alberta, is under contract to work
15 with our farm boss, Jack Waldner, and his staff,
16 to make sure that the entire farm procedures are
17 done properly.

18 All soil and manure samples are tested
19 for plant nutrient content at A & L Laboratory in
20 Ontario. All of the following equipment that is
21 used for seeding crops, banding commercial
22 fertilizers, spraying herbicides, fungicides,
23 collecting soil samples, injecting liquid hog
24 manure, are all done with equipment that have GPS
25 and auto steer technology. The reason we use this

1 technology is to prevent over-application from
2 overlapping.

3 Environmental management. We are
4 working with Manitoba Conservation to put in place
5 proper facilities to store bulk fuel. We also
6 collect used oil, oil filters, batteries, tires
7 and empty chemical containers, washed, for
8 recycling. It is picked up or delivered to the
9 proper outlets.

10 Manure and mortality management.
11 Manure from the hog operation is processed by
12 separating the solids from the liquids. The
13 liquids are stored in an earthen lagoon, and a
14 straw cover is used for odour control. The reason
15 the colony uses a straw cover is because it is
16 environmentally friendly, farm produced and of
17 100 percent organic matter. Plastic lagoon covers
18 are made from petroleum by-products, and are very
19 costly. And they do not last in our northern
20 environment. For disposal, they would have to be
21 recycled. Solid manure from the separation
22 process are stored and composted in a cement
23 bunker. Hog mortality are composted, along with
24 the composting hog manure.

25 Wellwood Colony files a Manure

1 Management Plan once annually with Manitoba
2 Conservation. Liquid and dry hog manure is tested
3 for plant nutrient content before being applied to
4 fields. Liquid manure from the lagoon is injected
5 into soil tested fields by Red Hand Ltd., from
6 Souris, Manitoba, a certified manure applicator.
7 Compost manure is applied to pastures and forage
8 crops annually. Manure from a cattle operation is
9 mostly composted and is applied to cattle pastures
10 only, which have also been soil tested for plant
11 nutrients content.

12 Diversification of our own natural
13 resources. The importance of exporting processed
14 meat products, instead of cereal grains, is
15 paramount. In exporting grains to other
16 countries, we export plant nutrients and our
17 natural resources to other countries. Plant
18 nutrients provided by proper manure management is
19 second to none. Seedlings have more vigor, crops
20 field more, quality of grain is better, soil is
21 better to work with, and chemical fertilizers are
22 too costly. Where do we get our chemical
23 fertilizers from? Potash we get from Esterhazy,
24 Saskatchewan, and nitrogen we get from Alberta,
25 and phosphates are imported from the USA.

1 Environmentally sound husbandry
2 practices. We have all heard rumours of how all
3 of the hogs around us are environmental hazards,
4 and play host to a whole slew of viruses and
5 pathogens that can start mutating, creating a host
6 of other pathogens and viruses that mankind will
7 not have control over.

8 A question for the panel and
9 Manitobans: How many siblings, relatives and
10 friends of yours have diabetes? Hogs supply the
11 pharmaceutical companies with medical material to
12 produce insulin for the diabetics. How many
13 Canadians have a porcine heart valve transplant,
14 and still have a high quality lifestyle left?
15 That should tell us that the hog's anatomy is
16 close to our own.

17 Canadian pork is amongst the best in
18 the world. Manitoba Pork producers have a
19 reputation for producing some of the finest pork
20 in all of Canada; thereby, making us amongst the
21 best pork producers in the world.

22 Regular surface and groundwater
23 quality. The location of Wellwood Colony to the
24 Towns of Dunrea and Ninette make it very important
25 that we be good stewards of land and water. We

1 presently have four ground wells that we draw
2 water from for human and animal consumption. Agri
3 Trend Agrology Ltd. tests our water source twice
4 yearly. We also have a water licence. We do not
5 allow any of our cows or calves to have access to
6 water from Bone Lake or Overend Lake. Water is
7 supplied to livestock from water troughs only.

8 Livestock management. Wellwood
9 Colony's hog boss, Peter Hofer, and his staff, are
10 well known to the hog industry for practicing good
11 husbandry. And his staying ability, he has spent
12 55 of his 70 years working and managing the
13 colony's hog enterprise, and is still in good
14 health.

15 We have also won many awards in the
16 carcass and live hog competition. At Wellwood
17 Colony, we presently have three members that
18 attend the Assiniboine Community College to obtain
19 a pork manager certificate. Seven colony members
20 also hold a "Truck Quality Assurance Certificate."
21 One colony member has a pesticide applicator's
22 licence, "structural." Veterinary expertise is
23 supplied by our local veterinary, Tom Walsh.
24 Nutrition is provided by Peter Vise of Precision
25 Feeds, a standing member of the Transplant Porcine

1 Heart Valve Society.

2 Pork is a moving commodity. It is the
3 number one protein consumed by humans in the world
4 today. For the Chinese population, which consists
5 of 1,300,000,000, pork is a lifesaver. If all of
6 the pork was to be replaced by fish and other
7 seafood, our oceans would be empty of marine life
8 today.

9 Livestock production is a driving
10 force in Manitoba's economy. The Manitoba
11 livestock industry contributed \$1.72 billion to
12 the cash receipts of the provincial economy in
13 2002.

14 Land use planning and approval. Good
15 old common sense works best. Don't allow
16 homestead residential development within the one
17 mile zone of functional livestock enterprises and
18 sensitive agricultural farming areas or vice
19 versa.

20 Environmental liabilities. In
21 closing, ladies and gentlemen, and Manitobans,
22 history is repeating itself. When the immigrants
23 came to this country and settled down in hundreds
24 of shanty towns and cities, the Crown had to move
25 them to other areas. And so they implemented the

1 Homesteaders Act, a quarter section of land per
2 family. There was an exodus from city to country,
3 reaching from Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains.
4 They mindlessly broke up the prairie soils, and
5 caused the worst natural disaster known to
6 mankind, the dust bowl. Drought, hunger, and
7 sickness drove them back to the cities.

8 Here we go again, exodus number two.
9 This time it's our natural resources. Lake
10 Winnipeg is a body of water, and has its veins
11 reaching out thousands of miles to draw in its
12 water, and has done so for thousands of years.
13 Past and present mass civilizations have built,
14 and are building, residential and industrial
15 enterprises beside these important natural
16 resources and veins that bring in the water.
17 Maybe Lake Winnipeg needs to be returned to its
18 original state, the way it was created. The
19 nutrient content of the water flowing into this
20 body of water is being polluted by past and
21 present human activities, so please let's not just
22 blame the livestock industry. Let's work
23 together, find and put in place reasonable,
24 workable and affordable solutions.

25 Please let's separate the chaff from

1 the wheat, bake and break the bread and drink the
2 wine. We can get better by working together.

3 I'd also like to recommend the
4 Environmental Commission to read the novel "Atlas
5 Shrugged" by Ayn Rand, maybe then they will see
6 that the livestock industry has enough burden to
7 bear. I personally think that the hog industry
8 has adequate rules and regulations in place
9 already.

10 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for
11 listening.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Hofer. That was a very comprehensive and
14 interesting presentation. I was just curious
15 because I wasn't aware of the link to insulin.
16 What is it that comes from pigs that goes into the
17 making of insulin?

18 MR. R. HOFER: They derive insulin
19 from the pancreas of the pigs for insulin
20 manufactured for humans beings.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: You learn something new
22 every day.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: Well, just one
24 question. You have a separation process. What
25 kind of a separation process do you have for your

1 manure?

2 MR. R. HOFER: We have imported a
3 separator from Germany. It's a high -- it's a
4 very cheap and effective piece of equipment that
5 you separate the solids from the liquids.
6 Therefore, you also get some of the phosphate
7 content from the manure with your solids. And in
8 that process, when you apply the solid, dry
9 compost manure, you can apply it to certain fields
10 that do need phosphate.

11 Also, in cleaning your lagoon, the
12 solids can be pretty difficult to handle. And
13 pumping long distance is the cheapest way, because
14 of fuel costs, protection to fields from heavy
15 equipment, running around with wagons. And the
16 reason people do that is because it's hard to pump
17 solids, you know.

18 MR. MOTHERAL: Is it a piece of
19 machinery? Is it like a centrifugal thing? How
20 does it separate it?

21 MR. R. HOFER: It has got screens in
22 there, and it's a screwdriver. It is driven like
23 a screw, like an auguring.

24 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay.

25 MR. R. HOFER: And it pushes the

1 liquids through the machine.

2 MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, I've got you.
3 There was another colony that we have heard that
4 from.

5 MR. R. HOFER: Yes, several colonies
6 have installed them.

7 MR. MOTHERAL: That's all I have. I
8 was just going to say, I do hear, when you said:
9 Does anybody have a pig valve in them? Well, yes,
10 I did know one guy. And just on the lighter side,
11 somebody asked him how he was one day and he said,
12 well, snort, snort, just fine.

13 MR. R. HOFER: Lots of people have
14 them.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hofer, you said
16 that this equipment was cheap. How expensive is
17 it?

18 MR. R. HOFER: It probably costs a hog
19 operation, a large hog operation, about \$150,000
20 to set it up. And the technology and the
21 engineers are working on pretty good systems in
22 Manitoba. And that's an advanced technology to be
23 introduced into the hog industry.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: So there are a number
25 of similar --

1 MR. R. HOFER: That's the reason why
2 we should have it, if it's affordable. Large
3 operations can only afford them. The average 250,
4 500 sow operation can't afford it.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: No. Edwin?

6 MR. YEE: Yes, just one question.
7 Mr. Hofer, and you will have to excuse my
8 ignorance, because I'm not a farmer. You have
9 mentioned:

10 "We also market high health swine
11 genetics to other producers."

12 What are these genetics?

13 MR. R. HOFER: Purebreds, purebred
14 livestock.

15 MR. YEE: Oh, purebred livestock,
16 thank you.

17 MR. R. HOFER: Yes.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Hofer.

20 MR. R. HOFER: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: That brings us to the
23 end of the list of those who have registered to
24 speak tonight. Is there anybody else in the
25 audience who would like to make a presentation

1 before we adjourn? Yes, sir? Would you please
2 state your name for the record?

3 MR. POETKER: My name is Bill Poetker.
4 BILL POETKER, having been sworn, presents as
5 follows:

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may
7 proceed.

8 MR. POETKER: First of all, I want to
9 apologize to the Commission for not having a
10 written report.

11 I did call the 1-800 number to try to
12 apply to be registered to speak today, and my call
13 was not returned. I had to leave a message. And
14 I'm not sure what happened. But, in any case, I
15 do have a few notes, which I will just add lib off
16 of, and hopefully make a few points.

17 Compared to the other people that have
18 spoken today, I represent a little more of what
19 you would call a mom and pop hog operation. It's
20 a family-owned, family-operated operation that is
21 considerably smaller than the ones that have
22 spoken today. It began because our son and his
23 family wanted to maintain a rural lifestyle. And
24 there was an option that was there, and that was
25 really the only one that we could see that would

1 work. It's a contract hog operation with Elite
2 Swine that has already been mentioned today.

3 And so we began about nine years ago
4 in this operation. We followed immediately soil
5 test recommendations. And, of course, as you know
6 now, they have mandated that we need to do a
7 Manure Management Plan and incorporate according
8 to the soil test recommendations.

9 We began, as well, almost immediately,
10 incorporating the manure. I guess, not only
11 because it is mandated, but it seemed like an
12 awful waste to apply manure lay on the surface of
13 the soil to evaporate, or whatever. And I guess I
14 was too stingy to let that happen, so we
15 incorporated it.

16 I want to speak a little bit about
17 water source protection. We do have two wells.
18 They are both approximately 300 feet deep. So we
19 are fairly sure, unless some surface contamination
20 comes into our there, our water supply is going to
21 be good. However, I want to mention that we did
22 build one barn. And then a year and a half, or
23 two years later, we added a second barn. And at
24 that time, we had to provide more manure storage.
25 And our desire was to provide a second cell so

1 that we would have the two cell lagoons.

2 We worked with an engineer and did
3 soil samples. And the soil samples showed that
4 there was some sand approximately 30 feet below
5 the surface. And even though the engineer said
6 that it would be accepted probably, he would
7 advise us not to put that second cell there,
8 simply as a precaution. And so we erred on the
9 side of caution and talked with the Environment
10 and Conservation Departments. And the result of
11 that was that we expanded our lagoon, the existing
12 one, in a different direction, which was more
13 viable, where it didn't show the sand in the soil
14 tests. And so we cooperated with Conservation
15 officials.

16 And I might add, as well, that right
17 from the beginning, when we got into this
18 business, we were aware of the environment and, of
19 course, the stories of some of the horrendous
20 things that had happened in North Carolina and
21 other countries, as well. And not only were the
22 people that opposed hog operations concerned about
23 that, so were we. We did not want that kind of
24 thing happening around us, and so we cooperated
25 with the Conservation officials as much as

1 possible.

2 I want to speak, just briefly, about
3 the odour. You have heard several times people
4 talk about the straw cover, which we, as well,
5 apply. We try to do our bests. Sometimes we get
6 very strong winds and it exposes part of the
7 lagoon. We have to get the people to come back
8 and put straw on it. And we, actually, have been
9 made very aware, by one of our neighbours, that
10 his daughter is getting married in an outdoor
11 wedding this July. And he lives a mile and a half
12 north of our hog operation. And he said that he
13 wants to make sure there is no smell at that
14 wedding.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Tell him to have a
16 wedding when there is a north wind.

17 MR. POETKER: Well, there are two
18 things that are going to happen. We are going to
19 make sure that our straw cover is in good shape,
20 and we are going to pray for a strong north wind.

21 Okay. As I've said, we believe in
22 regulation. And the hog industry is highly
23 regulated, as has been said several times today.
24 But I want to issue a bit of a comment about
25 sustainability. And the hearing, obviously, is

1 about environmental sustainability. But I want to
2 enter another word into this discussion, and that
3 is economic sustainability. And I don't want to
4 suggest that we compromise the environment for the
5 sake of economics. However, I think that we need
6 to keep reason as part of the approach.

7 I know that there is synthetic lagoon
8 covers that were mentioned already today. For an
9 operation the size of ours, if we were required to
10 add a synthetic lagoon cover, and all of the
11 equipment to maintain and install it and operate
12 it, it would put us in serious financial
13 difficulty, if not bankrupt us, and so that is a
14 concern.

15 I've heard that of a couple of
16 applications for hog barns in this area have been
17 approved. However, they are being told that they
18 will have to put a synthetic lagoon cover on. In
19 some cases, this is still in negotiation. But if
20 this, in fact, becomes mandated, these hog
21 operations will not go ahead, simply because it is
22 not economically viable to add a major cost like
23 that.

24 One other area that is a concern to
25 me, as well, is the area of buffer zones. And I

1 know, as I've said, that we incorporate our manure
2 because we don't want it running into the streams
3 and water sources at all. However, we sometimes
4 hear stories about 400-foot buffer zones. And if
5 you would take, for example, a quarter section of
6 land that would be isolated, it's the only quarter
7 you own, and there are neighbours around it, if
8 you had to keep that 400-foot buffer zone, your
9 area of soil that you can use for manure spreading
10 is extremely diminished. And it would make a real
11 hardship for a lot of people if that was enforced
12 in some cases.

13 So I mention those just as areas of
14 concern where I think that reason and reasonable
15 approach must be used in order to allow this
16 industry to continue. We have no problem with
17 reasonable regulations. And we want to keep the
18 clean environment and the water sources as much as
19 anyone else.

20 Thank you very much.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Poetker.
22 You said yours was a small operation. Just how
23 small?

24 MR. POETKER: 4,000 feeder head
25 operation. 4,000 feeder hogs there.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: And how much land do
2 you have?

3 MR. POETKER: Well, we own, at this
4 point, two quarters of land. We have some other
5 land that we have a caveat on that we can spread
6 at our discretion.

7 MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. One thing I meant
8 to mention before now, but I will mention it now,
9 with straw cover, the straw cover, like, how long
10 does it take to cover it? Like, I don't know, you
11 chop barley straw and you cover it. Like, how
12 long does it take to do that on a lagoon?

13 MR. POETKER: Probably a couple of
14 hours. You hire a company that has a machine that
15 will take a big round bale and processes it and
16 blows it on to the lagoon.

17 MR. MOTHERAL: And has that straw, in
18 the past, caused any problems in the removal?
19 Like when you are removing or pumping that lagoon
20 out?

21 MR. POETKER: It does create some
22 problems.

23 MR. MOTHERAL: When you are agitating?

24 MR. POETKER: Yes. It is more solid
25 material, and it can be a hardship.

1 MR. MOTHERAL: But one that you can
2 live with?

3 MR. POETKER: Well, it's a part of the
4 operation, yes.

5 MR. YEE: Mr. Poetker, where is your
6 operation?

7 MR. POETKER: It is in Turtle Mountain
8 municipality, eight or nine miles southeast of
9 Killarney.

10 MR. YEE: Now, you mentioned a
11 400-foot buffer zone. Is that in relation to
12 spread zones?

13 MR. POETKER: Well, I think it is put
14 in place with waterways. And I don't have a
15 problem with that. But sometimes you hear about
16 extending it to the property of your neighbour, so
17 that you can't spread too close to your neighbour.
18 So I guess what I am saying is that if that came
19 into effect, it would be a hardship.

20 MR. YEE: Okay, thank you.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: And I apologize that
22 nobody got back to you, Mr Poetker. We have been
23 on the road for two days. Although we do check
24 our messages, we had an unfortunate incident
25 yesterday where the Commission secretary fell and

1 is now in hospital with a broken leg. And so
2 Joyce, at the back of the room, is doing the job
3 of two people.

4 MR. POETKER: I called a week ago,
5 actually.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, then, that won't
7 work. That excuse is out the window. I am not
8 quite sure why nobody got back to you.

9 MR. POETKER: I might have gotten the
10 wrong number.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I am glad that
12 you came out here tonight, anyway. Does anybody
13 else wish to make a presentation this evening?
14 Last chance. Anybody else? Okay, then. Well, we
15 have had a very full evening. And I thank you all
16 very much for coming out this evening. And many
17 of you were here this afternoon, as well. And
18 some of you I've seen at other meetings, as well,
19 in the last few days. So thank you very much. We
20 will be resuming tomorrow afternoon in St. Claude.
21 Good evening.

22 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED AT 8:27 P.M.)

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

I, LISA REID, Court Reporter in the Province of
Manitoba, do hereby certify the foregoing pages
are a true and correct transcript of my Stenotype
notes as taken by me at the time and place
hereinbefore stated.

Lisa Reid

