BRANDON & AREA PLANNING DISTRICT

421 – 9th Street • Brandon, Manitoba • R7A 4A9
Telephone (204) 729-2121 • Fax (204) 728-2406

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May 3rd, 2007

The Manitoba Clean Environment Commission
305-155 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3H8

Dear Panel members;

Re: Hog Industry Review.

Enclosed please find a copy of a submission by Mr. Emil Egert, Councilor, R. M. of Cornwallis.

Mr. Egert was unable to attend the hearings in Brandon and has requested me to forward a copy to your office.

If you have any questions please call. Thanking you in advance for your assistance.

Regards,

Dan McPherson
Rural Planning Services Manager

DM/dm

FROM Emil

SPRING VALLEY

SAM LOFER

HENRY'S Secretary

MAY 0 7 2007

Good afternoon (or evening) members of the Clean Environment Commission Panel and ladies and gentlemen of the audience.

My name is Emil Egert and I am a ward councillor in the RM of Cornwallis. I am pleased to have this opportunity today to speak to you as a representative of ALL the rate payers in my ward and municipality. My rate payers include **hog producers** as well as **non hog producers**. They also include those who **support**, as well as those who **oppose**, hog production so my presentation will reflect a BALANCED position on the subject of hog expansion in Manitoba and the challenges it presents from both sides of the issue.

I personally live less than 1 mile east of the Spring Valley Hutterite Colony and in the 14 years that I have lived there, I can honestly say that I have only experienced odour emissions from the colony 3 times so I have to commend the colony for doing an excellent job of conducting their farm operations!

As for my presentation today, I intend to cover three topics:

1. First of all, I will start my presentation by providing some interesting survey results in a study which was recently undertaken by Ipsos Reid pertaining to Canadian opinions about the hog industry.
2. Secondly, I intend to give you a snapshot of Manitoba's planning system and summarize some of the steps municipalities take to improve land use planning when it comes to livestock operations.
3. And lastly, I will conclude with some recommendations that I feel the Clean Environment Commission and the Province should take into account in their decisions regarding the hog moratorium in Manitoba.

1. CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE ON HOG PRODUCTION IN CANADA

In 1999, Ipsos Reid was commissioned by several pork producer associations in Canada to undertake a study of consumer perceptions of the hog industry, farming and processing. This study tracked the attitudes and changes over the years after 1999 and provides information to the organizations about consumer perceptions of pork production and to take actions for improvements.. Subsequent studies were completed in 2002 and 2004.

Another study was to have been done again in 2006, but I don't know if this one has been completed. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario have participated in these studies each time with some participation from the other provinces. In this study, only those consumers which were NON-FARMING persons living in an urban or rural setting were surveyed. Approximately 1600 people were surveyed in the study.

The primary objectives of the study were to measure the level of awareness of hog farming practices among consumers and to discover which issues are most important to consumers. This study also segmented consumers in terms of their attitudes and beliefs towards the industry (sometimes the smallest segment makes the largest noise and we gain our perceptions from the media coverage about the outspokenness on the issues).

What did the survey show?

The survey showed that consumers know **very little about pork production.** Only 7% of the respondents said they knew "a lot", 37% said "very little" and 24% said they knew "nothing at all". **Their level of knowledge about pork production has decreased since 1999. Only 14% said that they would like to know more about pork production.** However, not knowing anything about a subject doesn't hold us back from having an opinion on it. Right?

Overall, non-farming Canadians hold positive impressions of agriculture (with approximately 69% feeling positive about agriculture). However, hog farming did not fair quite as well in 2002 with only 49% having a positive impression of hog farming. This number, however, has increased to 59% in 2004 so this suggests that things are changing for the better on the hog farming landscape.

When consumers are asked what comes to mind when they think about hog farming they tend to have negative thoughts related to environmental concerns and production issues. Specifically, they are concerned about: pollution, waste (or manure) management, water contamination, and air pollution/odor for the environment. They are concerned about large hog operations/mass production, poor treatment of animals and antibiotics as production issues. But interestingly enough they are also worried about

farmers not being able to make money.

When they were asked to rank the degree of importance that specific issues have, ensuring **food safety** was ranked number 1 and **reducing environmental impact** ranked number 2.

There is about 50/50 split in terms of how consumers feel about the hog production in relation to environmental protection . A very strong majority (74%) of Canadians, however **DO believe** that the hog industry is **well regulated and that producers are committed to improving the environment and 83% believe that the industry is actively looking for ways to improve.** I believe that with all the acts and regulations which have been passed in Manitoba within the last few years pertaining to the protection of our water and the health of our environment that we are well positioned to support a sustainable expansion of the hog industry. Having said that, it is equally important that the province put "teeth" in these regulations as well as others which regulate other industries and urban areas and have the necessary resources in place to monitor and enforce the regulations to ensure compliance.

The study found that Manitobans tended to be more critical towards hog production than other provinces, but this may merely reflect the timing of the study given that it took place during a period of significant hog expansion in Manitoba amid much opposition.

Reducing environmental impact is equal in importance to ensuring the safety of Canadian pork products in Manitoba and Manitobans' opinions about the environmental friendliness of hog farming have, in fact, **IMPROVED since 2002, which likely reflects the vast improvements made in the industry's environmental performance.**

Ensuring the safety of pork products is the most important thing to consumers. Pork is considered very safe to eat and this perception has increased from 48% in 2002 to 59% in 2004. In 2004, this was compared to chicken and beef in which the study showed that all were comparable. Consumers feel that Canadian products are safe to eat. Why do the consumers

feel that the products are safe? They have confidence in farm practices and trust in the government regulations. They also have had very few bad experiences with the products. They do, however, have concerns with products produced outside of Canada.

When it comes to **animal welfare**, most Canadians (59%) believe that hogs are well treated and this number has increased between 1999 and 2004. This likely reflects the changes in animal welfare regulations and the improved education of pork producers. Pork production are courses offered through ACC which incorporate numerous aspects of pork production including the numerous acts and regulations affecting the environment and the health of animals and workers.

Canadians also feel that the basics of hog care are covered, that they receive proper medical care, are well fed and have access to clean water. Interestingly enough, they do say that it just makes sense for the farmer to take good care of the animals because they will not make money if the hog is not well fed or well cared for.

In its conclusions, the study pointed out that environment has become a preeminent issue with consumers since 1999. Pork production is fundamentally considered in a negative light in terms of impact on the environment and large-scale operations tend to be the reason for these concerns. However, **hog farmers and the industry overall are considered trustworthy, compliant, well regulated and responsive to finding solutions for problems.** Overall impressions of the industry have improved but government and the industry are encouraged to continue to make improvements where reasonably possible.

(Source: Alberta Pork web-site)

2. MUNICIPAL LAND USE PLANNING

Land use planning has been around since 1916. But the legislation which formally enables municipalities to plan on a municipal or district basis is the called The Planning Act and it came into effect in 1976.

Until the expansion of the livestock sector in MB, land use planning was simple and more-or-less "adhoc". But now it has recently received a lot of attention and municipalities are now required to update obsolete plans or prepare new ones which better reflect the recent diversification of the agricultural industry. Historically, areas were designated "agricultural" or "rural" and any land use that doesn't quite fit one of the other land use designations is lumped into the "agricultural" category as a permitted or conditional use, to be dealt with on a case by case basis if and when the need arises. With the recent changes in the size and scale of agricultural operations, however, Manitoba has relied on a Conditional Use process for dealing with applications for the construction of larger scale operations.

Under this process, municipalities have the authority to approve, approve with conditions, or reject applications for livestock operations. This process however, to be valid, MUST be based on science BALANCED with public concerns about nuisance odours and environmental concerns. This was not always the case as emotions can run quite high at a conditional use hearing and can often dictate the outcome of an application for a livestock operation. Municipal by-laws and policies on the matter of land use planning and livestock expansion, however, must be clear but respectful of the needs of ALL rate-payers.

In 2005, Bill 40, The Planning Amendment Act came into force which addressed this concern. It requires that all municipal authorities have a Development Plan in place by January 2007 which must include a Livestock Operation Policy which identifies where Livestock Operations will be permitted, restricted in size, or prohibited all together. This up-front planning for livestock is expected to be based on scientific, environmental as well as

social factors. And it will be subject to joint municipal-provincial approval so that decisions based on strictly on emotions are weeded out.

Bill 40 cannot force a municipality to accept intensive livestock operations but it should not make it more difficult for proponents to get one approved. What it should do is impose some standards of fairness to the planning process which includes a lot of up-front planning and communication.

These livestock operation policies should provide the public and producers with more certainty as to where livestock operations will or will not be considered, and will help reduce local conflicts that now crop up when individual applications for livestock operations are brought forward to councils. Most municipalities should have their development plans and livestock policies in place by now - if not, they are scrambling to get them done.

In December, 2000, a report called "Finding Common Ground", was presented to the government which is a comprehensive summary of numerous public consultations about the sustainability of livestock expansion in Manitoba. I will quote something from the letter of submission that I feel is as valid today as it was 6 years ago - "The Panel is convinced that "common ground" can be found for sustainable livestock development in Manitoba. However, it will require commitment and action by the Government of Manitoba and the livestock industry to deal with the many concerns about the impact of livestock expansion on Manitoba's environment and rural landscape. It will also require a greater willingness on the part of opponents of the livestock industry to recognize that sustainable livestock development is not inherently bad. We believe this report contains recommendations and suggestions that can be used by all to find the "common ground".

It contains numerous recommendations and suggestions in the report which have served as a template for government to address livestock expansion challenges in a coordinated manner. Some of these recommendations still need more action and I intend to highlight these in my closing remarks.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

In closing, I would like to say that I don't believe that we have enough knowledge about the impacts of everything we do on the environment let alone the impacts of only one aspect of agriculture, namely hog production. By singling out only the hog industry in this moratorium, there may be a perception that we have ignored the issues arising from other sectors and are, therefore, putting all our "eggs in one basket".

There has been so much focus on the hog sector that I think we have tended to ignore or overlook what is happening in other agricultural sectors and industries. Granted, it seems that the moratorium was put into place to slow its growth but I think that all the new regulations you have in place will do that on its own without the need for a formal moratorium.

I agree that polluters should be held accountable for mistreatment of the environment but we must be careful what we ask for because for every finger that we want to point at someone else, there will always be four fingers pointing back at us. We can not single out the hog industry for all the woes of the environment when there are other agricultural sectors, industries and urban and recreational activities which should also be held accountable for their environmental practices. From what I have heard from the hog industry, so far, at these hearings, they have gone to great expense and effort to comply with new, and more restrictive, environmental regulations in Manitoba. I think these new regulations will place a bigger burden on agriculture and will act as a deterrent to rapid expansion of the industry. I only hope that they do not impede the ability of farmers to expand or diversify if they need to for survival.

I am not saying that the hog industry has a PERFECT environmental track record because, like every other industry and sector, you will always find those bad operators who make the rest of the industry look bad. But that does not mean that we should halt its growth. Rather, let's put the necessary monitoring in place to find out WHERE the pollution problems are occurring and go after the source. Let's invest in the necessary monitoring

infrastructure to adequately monitor impacts in our water, soil and air quality from ALL potential sources - urban centres, recreational areas, industry, mining, irrigation and other livestock sectors - let's not try to pigeon hole all our water problems on just one aspect of agriculture.

In closing I wish to reinforce some of the recommendations which came out of the "Finding Common Ground" report and I will quote some of these directly:

1. Government should focus substantially increased resources on the intensive livestock industry in Manitoba to provide analysis, guidance, inspection, monitoring, enforcement and technological assistance that can accommodate the present scale of the industry and anticipate its expansion.
2. Capability to undertake comprehensive analysis of the potential impact of new or expanded ILOs upon both local and larger area environments should be enhanced immediately in order to lead to strong critical decisions.
3. The Government of Manitoba should accumulate all relevant data concerning livestock operations in a central openly available information system in a GIS format to provide Manitobans with a realistic assessment of the sustainability of current operations and their effect on both the local and provincial environments.
4. For large scale livestock operations, monitor and enforce environmental and health regulations with a view to enabling these farms to be competitive in export markets while ensuring environmental stewardship.
5. For farmers in transition and those who currently derive limited income from farming, develop a package of programs that will enable these farmers to adjust their farming operations to a level that will provide them with an acceptable quality of life. This could also include a greater focus on higher animal welfare production systems.
6. Government should maintain a pro-active role and sustained leadership in mounting research related to environmental stewardship. It should

be prepared to read signals (such as the consequences of climate change) and "blue-sky" and "what if" questions.

Thank you for hearing my presentation.

Submitted by

Emil Egert
Ward Councillor
RM of Cornwallis