

Presentation to CEC April 25 2006

Good afternoon my name is Ed Kleinsasser. I am a member of Sunnyside Colony which is located about 20 kilometers south east of here. I am in charge of the egg laying hens and the pullets. We have 16,600 laying hens, and raise 66,000 pullets annually.

I would like to say thank you to the CEC for the opportunity to make a presentation this afternoon. You may wonder why a poultry producer would want to make a presentation to these hearings. I feel that any regulations that are adopted for the hog industry will affect all of animal agriculture.

I would like to take a few moments to tell our story of how we retooled our layer and pullet operations to be more environmentally sustainable.

In late 2005 we started to look at retooling our pullet facility and after that the layer facility. After much discussion and planning we decided to build a new pullet facility, and a manure storage building, and retool the layer barn when the pullet facility was finished. In early 2006 applied to the rural Portage municipal council for a permit to build the pullet barn. And then to Manitoba Conservation for the manure storage building permit. After the hearing a conditional permit was issued to build the pullet barn. The manure storage building process was a lot longer and involved hiring an engineering firm. Appointing a person to do our environmental farm plan, filing manure management plans, and to make sure we were complying with all conditions in effect at that time.

We wanted to do our part to help protect our water in Manitoba and are aware of the importance of environmental protection and wanted to operate our poultry operation

accordingly. The system we decided to go with was a dry manure system, with manure belts under the birds for the droppings to drop onto. These belts then take the manure to the end of the barn. Where a cross belt takes the manure to the manure storage building which is separate from the barns. We considered the dry manure system far superior and more environmentally Sustainable than the liquid systems which we were operating at the time.

We finished the pullet barn in the late fall of 2005, and installed the equipment in early winter of 2006, and housed the first chicks in early 2006. Still didn't have the manure storage building up as the process took much longer than we had anticipated. So we left it till next spring. Got it erected the next spring, and by mid summer in 2006 got Manitoba conservation's approval to store manure in it.

Last fall in 2006 we retooled the layer barn to the same manure management system as the pullet barn. Now both barns have the same manure management system and share the same manure storage building.

We went to this dry manure system to do our part to help protect the waters of Manitoba. We are aware of the importance of environmental protection and operate our layer and pullet operations accordingly. We are concerned about the health of our land and water. We made these decisions' about our poultry operation in the context of today, as well as planning for future generations. We have made these improvements, as before we were running a liquid manure system where a lot of water was added to the manure. The pits had to be emptied and the manure spread every six weeks regardless if it was summer or winter, dry or wet, nice or stormy. Now with the dry manure system the manure is stored for a year or longer, no water is added. And the manure is a lot friendlier to the environment.

We used considerable more resources to retool our layer and pullet operations than we would have by just retooling the cages and leaving the manure systems as they were.

We are aware of animal care and follow the code of practice guidelines, and participate in on-farm food safety programs. And being under the umbrella of the Manitoba Egg Producers, allows effective communication to producers regarding important issues, changes and strategic planning for the industry.

We utilize manure as a valuable fertilizer and soil conditioner. We file manure management plans. Have done an environmental farm plan. Do soil tests. And make the best use of manure in an environmentally sustainable way. Why wouldn't we as we plan to live on the land and our children and grandchildren do to.

In closing I would like to say many poultry producers I know have retooled and have made improvements to manure storage and handling. There is a trend away from liquid manure systems to dry manure systems which reduce odors, manure concentration, and volume, and improves the overall ability to manage manure properly. We are willing to do our part along with cities, towns, cottage owners, and urban people that choose to live in the country, to ensure that Manitoba's water and environment are protected. I would encourage the CEC and the province of Manitoba to consider the changes made by farmers who have embraced the environmental farm plans. The considerable financial commitment sends an important message to the public and the government of Manitoba that we are concerned about the environment.

Submitted by Ed Kleinsasser