



September 11, 2009

Dear Alberta pork producer,

All producers are faced with some degree of financial difficulty; no producer has been able to weather the storm with out incurring more financial debt. In light of the current financial situation of the pork industry, there is the possibility of a farm welfare emergency/crisis at any time. Alberta Pork, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (AARD), veterinarians and industry stakeholders have been working very hard over the past few weeks trying to grapple with the reality all livestock sectors may face this fall. Due to the set up of the hog production industry, we are feeling the affects the quickest and hardest.

Over the last few weeks, producer phone calls into the Alberta Pork office have been increasing as desperation in producers, caused by their financial situations, worsen while waiting for details on both the Federal programs - the loan and hog transition programs. As soon as details on the Federal programs are available, Alberta Pork will send information via fax or email to all producers immediately.

As a result of financial problems, there is real concern arising about animal welfare issues resulting from producers' inability to obtain feed for their animals. If you are nearing a crisis situation where your bank has pulled financing or your feed company will no longer extend the credit to cover the next load of feed, please contact Alberta Pork. Alberta Pork is not sure at what level we may be able to assist you; however, from other experiences over the last few weeks, we may be able to suggest options or solutions to alleviate part of the problems.

The Alberta Pork contact number is (780) 474-8288 or toll free at (877) 247-7675. Appropriate staff to contact on this matter are:

Paul Hodgman: ext 529 or direct at (780) 491-3529
Jodi Bakke: ext 528 or direct at (780) 491-3528
Stuart McKie: ext 527 or direct at (780) 491-3527
Charlotte Shipp: ext 525 or direct at (780) 491-3525

If you need to speak to Alberta Pork after hours, please contact Murray Roeske at (780) 977-1964.

If you have passed the 'emergency stage' and are already facing an immediate crisis on the farm, some available resource numbers are:

- For animal welfare: AFAC's ALERT Line is manned 24 hours per day, 7 days a week and is a confidential hot line for animal welfare concerns. The phone number is 1-800-506-2273.
- The Farm Debt Mediation Service offers financial counselling and mediation services to farmers who may be having trouble repaying their debts. This free service helps bring producers and their creditor(s) together with a mediator in a neutral forum to reach a mutually acceptable repayment agreement. Call toll free 1-866-452-5556
- Alberta Mental Health Line: 1-877-303-2642 or www.mymentalhealth.ca

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Hodgman", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Paul Hodgman
Executive Director