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Canola exports to China remain in limbo

By Jordan Twiss

As the COVID-19 pandemic cast a question mark over the world, and China's partial ban on Canadian canola imports prepared to enter its 13th month, it appeared, for a moment, as though the frigid diplomatic relationship between Canada and China had started to thaw.

The sliver of hope came on March 31, with news reports that Ottawa and Beijing had entered talks to lift the ban that cut Richardson International and Vitterra off from a market that had once accounted for 40 per cent of Canada's canola exports (exports from these two companies account for 70 per cent of Canada's total exports to China).

Some sources even went so far as to say that China had agreed to allow imports of Canadian canola, so long as exporters adhered to the stringent restriction that dockage not exceed 1 per cent.

It was great news.

Seemingly the next logical step after China reversed a similar ban on imports of Canadian meat in November of 2019 — though, it should be noted that this came about, in large part, after an out-

break of African swine fever devastated China's domestic pork industry.

The problem with the news, however, is that it turned about to be almost entirely inaccurate.

It's true enough that Canadian and Chinese officials held talks about the ongoing canola ban.

But just days after the misleading reports about the negotiations emerged, the Chinese government began categorically denying that anything resembling a resolution had been reached.

Instead, discussions centred around the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the two countries in 2016 after China expressed concerns about the crop disease blackleg.

Though China signalled that current levels of canola trade with Canada would continue, the expiration of the aforementioned MOU as of April 1 leaves that trade in a precarious position.

"Temporary measure means China feels that they can do what they want, basically, and they systematically rejected all our science and studies regarding dockage levels," said

Rick White, president of the Canadian Canola Growers Association, adding that this leaves Canadian canola producers in a worse position than before.

"So that is quite significant. A significant step backward to have them vocally express that they don't believe in the science Canada has provided."

Canada's tense diplomatic relations with China boiled over in December 2018, when Canada detained Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou at the behest of the United States.

Days later, China arrested Canadians Michael Spavor and Mi-

chael Kovrig (since dubbed "the two Michaels") in a move widely considered to be a retaliatory measure.

The ban on Canadian canola imports, which the Chinese government attributed to pest contamination without ever providing proof, came just three months later, and was accompanied by similar bans on other Canadian exports.

According to the Canola Council of Canada, Canadian canola seed exports to China were worth \$2.7 billion in 2018, and demand for the product was strong until the ban was put in place. After the ban, the organization stated that

canola prices dropped about 10 per cent, amounting to a \$1 billion hit to the Canadian economy.

As the producer of about 50 per cent of Canada's canola, Saskatchewan was hardest hit by China's ban. According to Chris Dekker, president and CEO of the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, the province lost \$720 million over the first nine months of the ban.

Though Canadian canola producers found alternative markets in Europe, where demand for biodiesel was high, Dekker said that China's key role as an importer

of the product wouldn't be easily filled.

What's more, the recent plunge in crude oil prices, brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and a spat between Russia and Saudi Arabia, has made these alternative markets iffy.

As if that wasn't bad enough, an early prairie winter left between 1.2 and 1.3 million acres of canola stranded in producers' fields, leaving experts expecting a glut in canola after this growing season.

It's a good thing, then, that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is working on an expedient solution to the China problem.

GOOD NEWS

GRANDPA WASN'T A PREACHER BUT HIS WORDS SPOKE VOLUMES

Arthur Jules Marion was born on Nov. 19, 1884 and passed away on April 5 1941. He was only 57 years old. Jules was elected MLA in the district of Ile-a-la-Crosse in 1926. He was later re-elected in the then redrawn district of Athabasca in 1938.

Jules Marion was my grandpa. I didn't have a chance to meet my grandfather. What I know of him is what I read or what my mother told me of him. I knew he was a businessman who owned a hotel or two. I understand he was well liked in northern Saskatchewan. To honour Grandpa Jules, a lake in Saskatchewan was named after him.

The thing that sticks in my

mind about Grandpa Jules is what my mother would say to me. She would remind me that her father would say there are good and bad in every race. I never forgot that. Grandpa wasn't a preacher but those words speak volumes. It reminds me to treat everyone with the love of Jesus.

Jesus said, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Mark 12:31

Jesus said, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31

Jesus said, "And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two."

Matthew 5:41

I can't say I always followed those wise words of Jesus, but that is my aim as the Holy Spirit enables me.

I think Mother Teresa was right when she said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the water to create many ripples."

May we do what we can to change our world for good by creating some ripples.

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COVID-19 creates uncertainty for producers

Even during a pandemic, people have to eat.

For that reason, Todd Lewis, president of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, says he's confident this growing season will be mostly "business as usual," in spite of COVID-19.

"Agriculture is a core industry in the province, and we're going to be in a position to supply a good, safe food supply, and also employment opportunities for people," he said. "That's something that's always been true, but never more true than through a crisis like this."

Of course, business as usual doesn't necessarily mean smooth sailing across the board for all producers in all agriculture sectors.

When the *Shellbrook Chronicle* and *Spiritwood Herald* spoke to Lewis on April 1, there were still lingering questions about credit availability for producers and how agriculture fit with the support programs that had been unveiled by the federal and provincial governments.

There were also concerns about the continuity of the supply chain. For growers, the major worry was about getting the necessary inputs, be it seeds, fertilizers, or other chemicals, on the farm in time to for the start of operations.

For livestock producers, meanwhile, Lewis said there were still fears about how a COVID-19 infection at a processing plant could impact production lines, and concerns about supply and demand.

"In certain parts of agriculture, be it the chicken sector for instance, if there's slaughter capacity lost, it gets very difficult very quickly for those producers," he said. "Decisions will have to be made for euthanizing birds, if they can't get to market in a timely fashion. They can't keep them on the farm, the production cycle doesn't work that way."

Adding that Saskatchewan producers will "do their best" to get the crop in, maintain production levels of livestock, milk and eggs, and keep supply lines open, Lewis also said that it's up to the federal government to make food security a priority during the pandemic.

"We need to see agriculture declared as an essential service. We're going to have

to be in place, because it's going to be a long winter if we're short food and I don't think anybody wants to see that," he said.

That declaration has since been made by the federal government (and the province), and has been applied to those who work at producing animal feed, at packing plants, as truckers and labour needed to produce and harvest food.

Public Safety Canada also considers those who work in veterinary health, workers who produce animal drugs, and those who work to manufacture and maintain equipment, as essential workers in the agriculture sector.

More recently, the federal government stepped forward to ease producers' worries about the supply of temporary foreign workers (each year, about 60,000 temporary foreign workers come to Canada).

While workers coming into the country will still be required to isolate for 14 days to ensure that they don't have or spread COVID-19, the federal government is offering employers up to \$1,500 per employee to offset the costs of the two-week isolation period.

Murray Hannigan, owner of Shellbrook-based Hannigan's Honey, says he was relieved that Ottawa listened to the concerns of producers from across the country.

Each producing season, Hannigan's Honey brings in 12 to 13 workers from Central America and hires on about the same number of Canadian employees.

Conceding that some people might question why operations like Hannigan's Honey don't just hire all Canadian employees (especially given the unemployment levels resulting from COVID-19), Hannigan explains that it takes about five seasons of working to become a passable beekeeper.

And, simply put, it can be a challenge to find domestic workers who are willing to do seasonal work over the long-term (though, Hannigan adds he's lucky to have a number of loyal, long-term Canadian employees).

"We have about 45 days from when we unwrap the bees to when we're needing to produce honey. It's a very tight, very intense, period of time, and we really need our

experienced guys," he said.

While Ottawa has opened the doors for temporary foreign workers to enter the country, and seven of Hannigan's employees arrived from Nicaragua just in time for his operation to get started, Hannigan says there are still obstacles for his operation to overcome.

First, the shutdowns caused by COVID-19 have created delays in getting passports and other paperwork for his remaining employees in order. This means

that his second wave of employees is going to be late for the start of production.

Second, the workers who have arrived aren't his most experienced beekeepers. Because of this, Hannigan says he's anticipating a 15 to 25 per cent drop in productivity this season.

"We're just going to have to try to make it work with a combination of our Canadian and foreign staff," he said.

As if the challenges posed by COVID-19 aren't enough, Hannigan also says that

global prices for the commodity aren't that strong, and that some beekeepers could go broke in 2020.

"That's the unfortunate part in agriculture. You try to produce as much as you can, as cheap as you can, and you hope that the world market will pay you a price that will keep you profitable. But that's not always the case."

While the picture is far from rosy for beekeepers like Hannigan, Lewis remains confident that producers will get through the COVID-19

pandemic.

That said, he's still urging producers to make sure they're part of the solution, rather than part of the problem, when it comes to the spread of the virus.

"This is serious. We don't want to see this spread into our communities," he said.

"We're always science-based in agriculture, and there's never been a time when we should be listening to our scientists and medical professionals more than right now."



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Security of the grain supply chain

**By Cam Dahl,
President of
Cereals Canada**

Customers around the world have begun asking Canada for assurances that our supply chain will remain whole during the COVID-19 pandemic and that Canada will be an ongoing reliable supplier of grain. These are valid questions that are shared by Canadian consumers. The lack of flour in most grocery stores is an indi-

cation that some believe there might be a break down in supply in the days or weeks to come.

I welcome the opportunity to provide assurances of the continued reliability of the Canadian supply chain amid the current crisis. As a leading global agri-food supplier, the Canadian industry fully appreciates the importance of meeting demand, especially in light of questions related to food security.

To begin it is important to underscore that there are strong supplies available of Canadian grain, including wheat, durum, barley and oats. Canada farmers and grain handlers continue to be in a strong position to keep meeting demand both in Canada as well as abroad. Shipments of Canadian grain are currently moving at a rapid pace with no interruptions at inland elevators where farmers deliver their grain or at port terminals where vessels are loaded. No delays are anticipated.

Across the country,

farmers are beginning the spring planting season. It would be wrong to assume that disruptions caused by COVID-19 won't occur, but Canadian farmers have access to the seed, fertilizer and crop input products they need to plant the 2020 crop.

In Canada, our flour mills are meeting the increased demand caused by a bump in home baking. We are not at risk of running out of flour. Our baking companies will continue to ensure that the products we love like bread and pasta remain on the grocery shelves.

There are a few key reasons why I am confident that the Canadian supply chain will remain operational during the pandemic.

First, shippers and exporters, along with the businesses that support them (e.g., railways and port operations) have established protocols to minimize the risk of infection to their employees. The health and safety of all workers of paramount concern. Farmers delivering grain recently will have seen some of these measures in action, such as restricted access to elevator offices. This is a departure from normal business practice, but the proactive steps taken today will help ensure that these facilities remain open tomorrow. The protocols put in place by links along the supply chain will also help ensure ongoing operations and minimize disruptions should infections occur.

The people who work in agriculture and food value chains are another reason

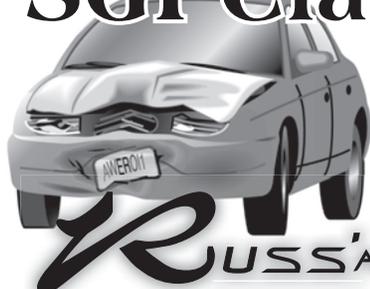
for having confidence in the reliability of Canadian supply. I am pleased that both provincial and federal government authorities have recognized the agriculture and food value chains as critical services and infrastructure and workers in these industries as essential.

Canada's farmers and those who work in agriculture and food value chains are central to efforts to provide essential services during the current crisis. Canada's critical agriculture and food infrastructure could not function without them. Canadians and people around the world need a stable supply of food and feed products from Canada in this time of crisis. To maintain food security, it is critically important that we create the conditions that allow workers in our agriculture and agri-food businesses to come to work and that we acknowledge their significant contributions.

The individual essential businesses that ensure that our grocery shelves are stocked, and the needs of our international customers are met, do not operate in isolation. The Canadian supply chain is a partnership of many players. This includes farmers, grain handlers and exporters, railways, truckers, millers and bakers. These links are all supported by a network of public and private research across the country and built upon a foundation of a strong science-based regulatory system.

The Canadian grain industry is well-positioned to help to meet the world's demand for a secure food supply. Our supply chain is highly efficient and resilient, which is especially important and valuable during this time of crisis. Significant infrastructure investments by all parts of the value chain in recent years have added to the strength of our system. Delivering food and agricultural products a priority for the industry, the Government of Canada and provincial governments. This priority and our commitment to meeting our customers' needs are not going to change.

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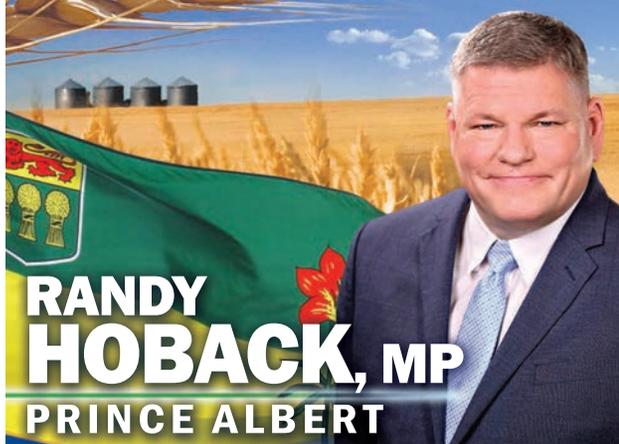


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Op-ed: Time for MPs to take a pay cut

**By Aaron Wudrick,
Federal Director, CTF**

As we struggle to contain COVID-19, virtually everyone is paying the price while the economy faces an unprecedented storm. Many members of Parliament are sharing in that sacrifice by donating their automatic pay raise to charity. The rest need to not only follow that example, but go one step further by taking a pay cut.

Nearly six million Canadians have already applied for either employment insurance or the temporary income replacement. The Trudeau government — with the consent of all the opposition parties — has already passed legislation authorizing more than \$180 billion to help families and businesses cope during this unprecedented emergency.

With no clear sense of when we might be able to return to even semi-normal life, it's difficult to accurately predict just how big the tab for emergency measures will get. And given that there are potentially thousands of lives at stake, it's understandable that concrete deficit calculations will have to wait.

But as taboo as it might be to observe, there is still no ignoring the elephant in the room: this crisis is very, very expensive. That's why it's important for our MPs to get ahead of the inevitable fiscal challenges ahead and vote to cut their own paycheques. For both practical and symbolic reasons, Canadians need to know that the people in charge are willing to make sacrifices themselves, before asking the rest of us to endure even more pain.

Consider the enormity of the task. The Parliamentary Budget Officer projects next year's federal deficit will be \$184 billion, seven times larger than it was predicted to be just two months ago, and that analysis assumes that there will be no additional spending measures forthcoming.

Eventually, all of the measures will have to be paid for and that will require many painful choices. It won't happen overnight, but over time, the public sector will be forced to endure salary cuts, reduced staffing levels or both. Pet spending projects and nice-to-have programs will take a backseat to core government services. Prospective tax measures designed to recoup government revenues that have been decimated by

the dormant economy will have to be balanced against the risk of trampling on the recovery.

Many Canadians who have seen their paycheques shrink through no fault of their own fairly wonder why MPs should be immune from this predicament. Many MPs already understand this, which is

why nearly half of them have voluntarily agreed to donate their annual pay increase this year. They know full well that taking a pay hike during this crisis looks bad, especially when they are already earning \$178,900, which is triple the average Canadian household income of \$59,800.

While it's good to see MPs

donating those pay raises to charity, they need to go further. Most Canadians aren't merely forgoing raises. Most Canadians are struggling with sharp drops in their income and savings and millions are out of work. MPs need to take a pay cut.

The sooner they lead by example to show both the

bureaucracy and taxpayers that our leaders are willing to share in the pain of this sobering new reality, the better placed they will be to make the case for necessary reductions elsewhere.

Around the world, many politicians seem to understand this. Hong Kong's leader is taking a 10 per cent pay cut.

New Zealand's prime minister cut her own pay, along with her entire cabinet and top bureaucrats, by 20 per cent for the next six months. In Japan and India, politicians are cutting their salaries by 20 and 30 per cent, respectively, for at least the next year.

Canadian politicians would do well to follow suit.

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Small ruminants used for weed control on Elbow Community Pasture

About 2,000 cow and calf pairs, 2,000 ewe and lamb pairs, and 2,000 doe and kid pairs spend their summers grazing the community pasture near Elbow, SK.

The rugged expanse of crown land that stretches from Douglas Provincial Park to the Qu'Appelle valley and serves as the summer home for many ruminants is currently looked after by the Wilner-Elbow Community Group. Previously, it had been under the umbrella of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA).

PFRA was a branch of Agriculture and Agrifood Canada that was formed in the 1930s after severe droughts hit Western Canadian Provinces. The branch was tasked with helping farmers and ranchers with soil conservation, erosion prevention, water resource development, and pastureland management.

The branch was officially dissolved in 2009 which is when the Wilner-Elbow community group took over management. The group organizes the use of the land for its cattle patrons and contracts out spray and animal management for weed control. More specifically, the control of leafy spurge, a nasty invasive weed that produces a caustic sap making it painful for cattle to eat. Sheep however don't mind it and goats "choose it over other things," says Raina Vingerhoeds,



Some of the sheep and goats from No Kidding Weed Management grazing leafy spurge on the Elbow Community Pasture.

grazing contractor at No Kidding Weed Management.

Raina grew up on a hobby farm in southwestern Ontario where her parents kept 30-50 Boer goats for meat production. They now keep around 100. After receiving a degree in Animal Biology from the University of Guelph, Raina made her way out to the prairies and spent some time working for a feed company before getting an opportunity to work as a summer herder for Stuart Chutter at the Elbow Community Pas-

ture. When Stuart decided to part ways with the community pasture, Raina and fellow herder Cornelia Seeholzer stepped up to take his place. While many of the sheep and goats that Raina and Cornelia herd belong to area farmers, they do own a small portion of them. Raina purchased 100 goats in October 2018 and has maintained her herd size since.

The animals are turned out to pasture from May 15 up to Oct. 1, with the cattle trailing the sheep and goats. The animals are moved around the pasture throughout the summer and if there is enough

time before snow starts to fly later in the season, the sheep and goats will make another pass to get the second wave of leafy spurge before it can set seed.

Herders travel out to the sheep and goat herd in the morning to let them out of the electronet fence they are kept in at night. They then lead them using herding dogs and ATVs to areas with leafy spurge and watering holes throughout the day, moving on as they decide that enough of the weed has been cleaned up so that cattle will want to graze. The small ruminants can clean between 80-100 acres of leafy spurge in their 8-hour day. At the end of the grazing day, the animals are penned back up and watched over by the dogs.

The rugged landscape of the Elbow Community Pasture makes spraying for the invasive weed difficult and extremely expensive. The sheep and goats can cover a larger area as there are some spots that while suitable for grazing animals, a side-by-side with a sprayer attached cannot access. While sheep must be introduced to the leafy spurge, Raina says that the curious goats are like "kids in a candy shop," when they find it. Sheep will consume enough spurge to make up 50 per cent or their diet while goats eat enough to make up 80 per cent of their diets.

Continued on page 19



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Small ruminants used for weed control on Elbow Community Pasture

Continued from 18

Over the winter, patrons take their animals home to calve or kid or lamb out. With the birthing season just about over, it is putting a cap on one of the busiest times of the year before the animals get turned back out to pasture. Summer grazing makes for long days with a lot of necessary forward planning to deal with issues as they arise.

For Raina, July is the most beautiful time of the year, when the weather is warm and the spurge is flowering. "It al-

most looks like canola," she says. There is an abundance of wildlife that can be spotted and many interesting plants to look at. "I love being out herding and feeling like I am making a positive impact on the environment," she said when describing her favourite part of her job.

Gearing up for her third season out on the pasture, Raina reflected on some of the challenges to the job.

The days during the summer may be long but they are enjoyable, and Raina and Cornelia are able to hire some sea-

sonal staff to allow for some time off throughout the summer. "When you have good people, you can work on a roster. I don't think I'd be able to do this without that," said Raina.

Being new at the job also presents its challenges. Raina said she still has lots to learn, but it is worthwhile. One of her favourite aspects of the job, which was completely new for her, was training and working with the herding dogs.

Weed control contractors are also dependent on the volunteer board secur-

ing funding which is one of the biggest challenges. "The volunteer board puts so much time and effort into arranging things, but we are really dependant on them getting funding to pay for us as herders," said Raina.

The volunteer board is very motivated, however, and they understand the importance of keeping the leafy spurge under control. Raina says that without the work the sheep and goats have done over the past few years, they would have lost a lot of pastureland already.

Carbon costing review confirms huge loss to farm income

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) has released updated estimates on the financial impacts of the federal carbon tax on Saskatchewan producers.

"Federal Minister of Agriculture Marie-Claude Bibeau has asked the agriculture industry for evidence of what the carbon tax is costing Canadian farmers," says APAS President Todd Lewis, who farms near Gray, SK. "We've responded with estimates that are backed up by producer bills in 2019."

APAS's costing review takes into consideration all major farm expenses not currently exempt from the carbon tax. These include grain drying, rail transportation, heating and electricity, and truck hauling of crops off the farm.

The evidence is stark: on average, Saskatchewan farmers can expect to lose 8 per cent of their total net income in 2020 to the carbon tax. For a household managing a 5,000-acre grain farm in Saskatchewan, this will take the form of a \$8,000-10,000 bill.

In less than two years, when the carbon tax increases to \$50/tonne in 2022, this bill will go up to \$13,000-17,000 for the same household – the equivalent of a 12 per cent decrease in net income.

"It's comparable to having 12 per cent of your pay cheque disappear," says Lewis. "Farmers don't set our prices, so those increased costs are coming directly off our bottom line."

"APAS's numbers reflect my personal experience down to the penny," says APAS Vice-President Bill Prybylski, who oper-

ates a grain, oilseed, pulse and cattle farm with his son, brother, and nephews near Willowbrook, Sask. "This past year was unprecedented in terms of the role grain drying played for farmers in our province. Without using propane to dry our grain, the wet fall would have meant losing a huge portion of our crop."

Rail transportation is another huge and unavoidable taxable expense incurred by farmers.

"Trucking my crop to the grain elevator, and then shipping it by rail to the coast is one of my

biggest annual expenses," says APAS Vice-President Ian Boxall, who farms at his century farm near Tisdale, Sask. "Transporting crops is a necessary farm expense, but for some reason it's not exempt from the carbon tax."

APAS is advocating, on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers, for a carbon tax exemption on all farm expenses, including those from 2019. "Our hope is that this is the evidence the Minister is looking for," says Lewis, "and that the Federal Government will step in to help farmers."

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COVID-19 shuts down half of Canada's beef supply

A COVID-19 outbreak in a Cargill plant at High River, Alberta has shut down almost half of Canada's beef supply, leaving many farmers with no place to sell their cattle. Nearly all beef produced in Canada is processed by three high-volume, high-throughput meat packing plants: Cargill's High River facility, the JBS plant in Brooks, Alberta and the smaller Cargill plant in Guelph, Ontario. The two Alberta plants have 85% of Canada's beef slaughter capacity and both are now grappling with COVID-19 outbreaks. While this choke point gives US-based Cargill and Brazilian JBS tremendous power over both cattle prices paid to farmers and the grocery store beef prices paid by consumers, the pandemic outbreaks show it is also one of the weakest links in Canada's food system.

Last week a major COVID-19 outbreak in Cargill's Alberta plant and a smaller outbreak at the JBS plant have required slow-downs at the JBS plant and a shut-down of the Cargill facility to protect the health of

plant workers and the wider community. This also has a domino effect through the food system. Demand for cattle has collapsed, and if supplies dwindle, retail beef prices will likely rise. Without intervention, the price difference between the price of cattle and grocery store beef will end up harming both farmers and consumers while enhancing the already large profits of JBS and Cargill.

"Excessive concentration of ownership and centralization of beef processing, supported and encouraged by our federal and provincial governments, has now put the health of workers, the beef supply and the livelihoods of thousands of farmers in jeopardy," said Iain Aitken, National Farmers Union (NFU) member and Manitoba beef producer. "We extend our heartfelt condolences to the loved ones of



the Cargill worker who lost her life to COVID 19.

"Farmers need emergency support so we can take care of our livestock until the plants ramp up again. Health and safety come first, but you can't tell the cows to stop eating and growing until the crisis is over," said Ian Robson, Deleau Manitoba mixed farmer and NFU Board member. "We need a price floor to make sure that Cargill and JBS don't take advantage of this crisis to reduce prices.

Today's government must not make the same kind of mistakes as during the BSE Mad Cow crisis when the giant packers pocketed support program money and put hundreds of family farms out of business."

The NFU also urges emergency support to lay the groundwork for a more resilient and fair meat sector in Canada.

"The NFU's vision is for a food policy based on food sovereignty," said Tim Dowl-

ing, grassfed beef producer from the Kingston, Ontario area. "Our food system would then support more family farmers providing more food for more Canadians by focussing on building up our capacity to serve local and regional markets across the country."

In 2008 the NFU published a comprehensive study of Canada's cattle industry, analysing the development meat packing companies' concentration, the impacts

on cattle prices for farmers, and offering solutions that would reorient the system towards a more resilient beef sector. Its recommendations are more valid than ever today.

"The COVID-19 crisis is a wake-up call and an opportunity to rebuild our economy in ways that work for people, and which have the resilience to manage the crisis conditions that will undoubtedly occur in the future," conclude Aitken.

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The family of the late Rick Kiszka would like to thank all those who wrapped their hearts around us at this difficult time. Thank you for the condolences delivered at a distance through, texts, calls, cards, flowers, and food. We send hugs to you all. A special thanks to Dr. Parsi and hospital staff for such awesome care and compassion for Rick. Also, a big thank you to Tammy, Lynn, and Fred from Beau Lac Funeral Home. Much love from the Kiszka family. 1-18C

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Agristability interim payments increased for Sask. producers

The federal and provincial governments have agreed to increase the 2020 AgriStability interim benefit payment percentage from 50 per cent to 75 per cent for Saskatchewan producers.

Interim benefits can provide producers with a portion of their final AgriStability benefit early, to help support losses and cover costs. With this increase, Saskatchewan producers can apply for an interim benefit to receive 75 per cent of their estimated final 2020 benefit before completing their program year. Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) is also waiving the six months farming and one production cycle criteria for participants applying for 2020 interim benefits.

"I want to reassure all farmers and food business owners that our Government recognizes their vital contribution to our communities and is committed to helping them cope with this exceptional situation," said

Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau. "These increased advance payments will enable Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers get the additional cash flow they need to continue their operations during these difficult times."

"In these uncertain times, the AgriStability interim payment can help producers with cash flow needs," Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "If a producer qualifies for an interim benefit, this is a great way to get additional funds for their operation before filing their final application."

Interim benefits are calculated based on the farm's estimated program year margin, relative to its estimated reference margin. The estimated program year margin must show a decline of 30 per cent or more compared to the estimated reference margin. If a producer receives an interim benefit payment, they must still file all final program year forms

and meet program requirements by the assigned deadlines. The Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan understand the challenges facing producers during the unprecedented times created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We continue to evaluate our entire suite of business risk management programs to ensure they are meeting the needs of Saskatchewan's agriculture industry.

To enrol in the AgriStability Program or to apply for an interim benefit, producers can contact their local SCIC office or call the AgriStability Call Centre toll-free at 1-886-270-8450. The deadline to enrol in AgriStability for the 2020 program year was extended to July 3, 2020.

SCIC AgriStability staff are available to assist producers over the phone at 1-866-270-8450 or through email at agristability@scic.ca, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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DELIVERY ALLOWANCE	- \$3,000
NON-STACKABLE CASH	- \$1,000
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YOUR BUY NOW PRICE \$36,989

STOCK# N17131



**LAST NEW 2019 FORD EDGE SE
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MSRP	\$38,249
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PAYMENTS ON US CASH	- \$2,000

YOUR BUY NOW PRICE \$33,249

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**DEMO UNIT 2019 F150 STX
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ECOBOOST, AUTO, FULLY LOADED,
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MSRP	\$52,194
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MSRP	\$72,784
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ONLY 12,000 KMS, LIKE NEW
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STOCK# U01765

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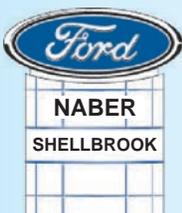
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