

Agriculture Workshops Summary Manitoba's Green Future:

A Dialogue on Climate Change Action and Greening in our Economy

Tuesday, October 23, 2007, Hotel Fort Garry, Winnipeg

Moderator: Ian Wishart

Presenters: Hank Venema, Steve Teller

CGI presenter: Jane Gray

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Summary of the Province of Manitoba's presentation:

Actions to Date

- Covering New Ground
- Riparian Tax Credit
- Retail Sales Tax Exemption for manure treatment equipment
- MASC Environmental Enhancement Loans and Alternative Energy Program
- Agricultural Policy Framework
- BMP Water Protection Top- Up
- Livestock Regulation Adjustment Funding
- Marketing support for organic farming
- Biogas research on Manitoba hog farms

Manitoba has the opportunity to assist the agriculture sector mitigate and adapt to climate change, while providing environmental, economic and social co-benefits.

Three pronged approach

- BMP component targeted to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the agriculture sector by 2012.
- Research component to build capacity for enhanced mitigation, sequestration & adaptation, before & beyond 2012.
- Extension activities to support and assist agriculture stakeholders

Beneficial Management Practices

- More efficient use of nitrogen fertilizers: *right rate, right time and right place* (nutrient management plan and soil testing) and *right form* (e.g., use of inhibitors and slow release nitrogen fertilizer);
- Organic fertilizers management: improved manure handling and cleanout practices in the barn, covering manure storages and manure composting;
- Feeding, grazing and cropping strategies.

BMP's Can Lead to Economic Opportunities

- *Renewable energy* = diversification & guaranteed annual income
- *Biofuels* = diversification & reduction of on farm fuel costs
- *Energy efficiency* = reduced on-farm energy costs
- *Timed applications, soil testing, nutrient management, forage crops* = reduced input costs
- *Marketing "Made in Manitoba" locally and sustainably grown products* = potential to expand local, national & international markets
- *Some of these practices may have the potential to be verified as offset credits*

Summary of discussion

The questions for discussion presented to participants included:

Workshop I

- Given the key initiatives we have heard to date, are there others that you think are critical to moving toward a greener economy?

Workshop II

- What are the potential long term goals for the sector for 2017?
- How do the actions we identified this morning get us there?
- What are the next steps?

Workshop III

- What are the best ways to engage your sector/community?
- What are specific recommendations for how government and your sector/community can work together to implement next steps?

Guided by the questions, several main themes emerged from the discussion (numbering does not denote priority):

The government of Manitoba needs to:

1. Develop a baseline of current emissions within the agriculture sector
2. Invest in more research (baseline for the agriculture sector, Best Management Practices (BMPs), etc).
3. Invest in more extension and education of consumers so they learn about the agricultural sector in general as well as how agriculture and consumers contribute to the issue of climate change
 - Invest in extension and education of producers as well—provide producers with examples of benefits to their operations in responding to climate change (in dollar figures), what responding to climate change will cost them, what supports are available to reward producers to “do the right thing”, and the costs of not responding to climate change—provide the financial information similar to the Stern Report from the United Kingdom
4. Have legislation and policies which do not create perverse subsidies and which are incentive based rather than mandated
5. Invest in mitigation and adaptation strategies using existing programming such as the Environmental Farm Plan with the BMPs and expanding programming which builds on mitigation and adaptation strategies.
6. Build/enhance collaboration and cooperation between agriculture sector, private sector, and government and other stakeholders to tackle the climate change issue
7. Develop a “value added” and more localized economy to help support/expand the agriculture sector
8. Develop a provincial carbon market with the intent of expanding/building to a national and international market
9. Co-ordinate and streamline the many levels of government for the agricultural sector as the multiple levels of government are complex and have many programs, levels of regulations, policies, and funding
10. Develop a holistic approach to the environmental issues we are asking producers to respond to—do not layer programs but ensure that programming, regulations,

- policies, and incentives are working towards the same goals and are not at cross-purposes
11. Climate change and other environmental issues currently facing Manitoba are everyone's responsibility. Therefore, we need to educate the consumer on the "good" things that the agricultural sector is doing in response to climate change in addition to helping the wider society understand why costs may increase and what benefits they receive from supporting producers who are taking action(s) to respond to climate change and other environmental issues

The Province is undertaking a number of actions to address climate change in addition to what has been mentioned here. For more information, please visit <http://www.gov.mb.ca/stem/climate/index.html>