

# Environmental Farm Planning in Manitoba

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Environmental farm planning supports Manitoba's reputation for producing safe, high quality food in a sustainable manner while leaving a legacy for future generations.

### **Q What is an EFP?**

**A** The Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) is a voluntary self-assessment conducted by a farmer to assess environmental risks on their farm. Through the EFP process, environmental strengths and areas of concern are identified, and action plans are established to improve environmental risk areas.

### **Q How do I complete my EFP?**

**A** Contact Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development and your name will be put on a waiting list. You will be contacted when a workshop is scheduled for your area. By participating in a half-day workshop you will receive instruction and support on how to complete your farm self-assessment. Once complete, you must arrange to have your workbook reviewed by one of Keystone Agricultural Producers' reviewers to ensure completion, consistency and confidentiality. The reviewer signs off on completed workbooks and a Statement of Completion certificate is issued. The Statement of Completion certificate is valid for 5 years, upon which time it requires renewal.

### **Q Why should I complete an EFP?**

**A** Farmers complete an EFP for a variety of reasons. For some, it ensures peace of mind and a commitment to the environment. Some food processing plants require that you complete an EFP and a commodity specific chapter in order to fill a contract (ex: potatoes to McCain's or field peas to Roquette). Consumers are demanding their food be produced in a sustainable manner, so it is likely that other commodities will also

look to the EFP when developing their own sustainable sourcing requirements. In addition, the EFP has been integrated with several financial incentive program initiatives that provide environmental benefits. This includes Ag Action Manitoba Assurance Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) and Watershed Ecological Goods and Services, and the new GRowing Outcomes in Watersheds framework.

### **Q Can I apply for financial assistance through these program initiatives without completing an EFP?**

**A** Yes, producers can apply for funding without an EFP. However, if approved, a valid Statement of Completion (SoC) must be submitted to the Ag Action Manitoba program along with their Claim. This means the producer must participate in a workshop, complete their workbook and have it reviewed, allowing time to receive SoC from KAP prior to claim submission. Claims will NOT be accepted if a valid SoC is not included. In situations where the Watershed District is delivering programming to producers, the district will be required to report on EFP participation and may be required to submit a copy of valid EFP Statements of Completion for participating farmers.

### **Q Why do I have to attend a workshop? Can't it be done online?**

**A** At this time, producers must participate in a facilitated workshop where they receive their workbook and instruction. Online EFP development is being investigated as an opportunity to allow more flexibility to producers and to save on cost of materials.

## The Watershed Benefits from Environmental Farm Planning

- Completing an EFP increases education and awareness of environmental issues and practices that results in many environmental benefits. Producers who go through the EFP process complete a list of their environmental assets and risks on their own farms, and develop action plans with timelines to address all areas of risk. At the same time, they recognize more holistic sustainability measures as well as the value of ecological goods and services they are providing to society.
- The EFP process not only leads to overall improvements on-farm, but also to the awareness of more holistic sustainability measures. As awareness and participation expands amongst producers, more cumulative improvements to watershed health and resiliency can occur.
- The EFP workshops can also help connect producers with organizations and potential programming that may aid in producers implementing actions identified in their EFPs, leading to improved local environmental outcomes.

## Producers and Districts Working Together

Watershed Districts identify primary needs of their watershed through Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IWMPs). This planning process highlights the main issues within the watershed and provides a roadmap for targeted action to improve the health and resiliency of the watershed.

Watershed Districts rely on IWMPs to develop locally relevant programming to address watershed priorities. Having district farmers with their own EFPs, and the education and environmental awareness that comes with it, can help Watershed Districts build on the synergies between on-farm environmental and overall IWMP objectives. Collaborative work between producers and districts ensures a targeted approach that addresses identified watershed issues, resulting in the best return on investment and improvements to watershed health.

For more information, contact your local Agriculture and Resource Development office or call **1-844-769-6224**.

### Contact us

- Go to [ManitobaEFP.ca](http://ManitobaEFP.ca)
- Toll free at 1-844-769-6224
- Follow us on Twitter @MBGovAg

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