

Transportation Issues Cost Saskatchewan Producers Billions

Farmer coalition seeks producer involvement in transportation reform

EMBARGO UNTIL 10 AM Tuesday, December 2

Monday, December 1 – Regina, SK Western grain producers lost an estimated \$3.1 billion in 2013/14 and could lose an additional \$2 billion in 2014/15 because of failures in the transportation and handling systems. Given these significant losses and other related concerns, the coalition, which consists of Sask Pulse, Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission and Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS), submitted preliminary recommendations on the Canada Transportation Act (CTA) review panel this morning and is calling on other organizations and individuals to submit their comments before a December 31, 2014, deadline.

“The grain handling and transportation system has undergone substantial change. Railways are centralizing their services and placing significant investments made by producers, shortlines and producer car loading sites at risk,” says Norm Hall, APAS President and spokesperson for the coalition. “From the coalition’s perspective, if we are redesigning a transportation system that is clearly not working for producers, who is actively looking after producers’ interests?”

The coalition framed their recommendations around four objectives that include fostering competition, increasing market transparency, being positioned for future growth, and ensuring producers have a voice in the transportation system. The recommendations also call for a full railway costing review to be made before any adjustments are made to the maximum revenue entitlement program, a higher priority placed on producer cars, and that the CTA create a rail oversight group, that includes agricultural producer representation, to assess ongoing operations of the railways.

“The bottom line is that farmers and the Saskatchewan economy suffered a substantial loss in 2013/14 and these producer income losses continue into 2014/15,” Hall says. “Major adjustments need to be made to ensure farmers are treated fairly in a transparent environment with long-term commitment. The coalition hopes that other organizations and individuals will respond to the call for submissions.”

The coalition report can be found at: [Link](#).

Information about submitting recommendations on the Canada Transportation Act Review can be found on the Government’s website at <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/ctareview2014/canada-transportation-act-review.html>.

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