



Agriculture is Everyone's Business

**APAS in Action
October/November 2013**

Welcome to APAS IN ACTION, bringing you the latest news on how your general farm organization is working on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers. If you are receiving this as an APAS Member RM Rep, RM Administrator or Reeve (Member or Non-Member), we encourage you to share this information with your Council at your next scheduled meeting and with ratepayers in your RM whenever possible.

November is an exciting, albeit busy, month for our organization. There are three public reviews of concern to Saskatchewan ag producers currently underway, two with submission deadlines of November 30 and the other in April. As the united voice of thousands of agricultural producers in Saskatchewan, APAS is committed to ensuring that voice is heard throughout these consultations.

1. The SK Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Act – Public Review (Due Nov. 30)

In August 2013, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Economy announced a public review of Surface Rights legislation. The review will consider how surface property rights can be best defended in the context of expanding oil and gas exploration and changing agricultural practices. This is an opportunity to share ideas, address concerns, and help ensure the resulting legislation reflects all the costs associated with resource development on Saskatchewan's farmland. To initiate discussion, APAS is sponsoring three public meetings:

"Surface Rights in Saskatchewan"

Featuring presentations from the Alberta Farmer's Advocate, Carol Goodfellow
& the SK Ministry of Economy

- November 18: North Battleford - Golden Eagle Casino -11902 Railway Avenue
- November 19: Swift Current - Co-op Agro-Centre - 2284 South Service Road West
- November 20: Weyburn - Tommy Douglas Center - 400, 10th Ave SE

Doors open 9:30 am

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. presentation, discussion, Q & A

Open to the general public. Free Admission.

All landowners and farmers are encouraged to attend.

We also encourage full, independent participation in the review process. Please visit the Saskatchewan Ministry of Economy, Surface Rights Review webpage, www.economy.gov.sk.ca/SurfaceRightsReview and find out how you can provide your input.



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2. Water Drainage Review – Saskatchewan Public Review (Due April 30)

The Province is looking for input on how to deal with drainage issues, which have been especially important to the eastern areas in the past few years. APAS has put this issue on the agenda of our District Meetings with speakers from the newly created Water Security Agency and discussion among APAS Reps. The input from these discussions will be incorporated into an APAS brief to the review. Individual producers are welcome to contribute to the Environment Ministry review by completing the online survey at: <http://agdrainage.insightrix.com/login.php>

3. Crop Variety Registration (AAFC) – Federal Public Review (Due Nov. 30)

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has released an “Options Paper”, outlining four potential options for the future of varietal registration in Canada. AAFC is currently seeking input from producers and our APAS Reps at District and Committee Meetings to be used, together with background information gathered by our Research Officer, to inform our brief to the review, due November 30.

Varietal registration is an important regulatory component to Canada's crop sector. *The Seeds Act* and its regulations set standards and protocols that varieties must meet in order to be approved for commercial sale. These standards relate to the agronomic performance, disease tolerance and quality characteristics of candidate varieties. As a result, changes to the variety registration system will have a direct impact on the types of varieties available to producers.

We encourage all agricultural producers to complete AAFC's online survey on crop variety registration. Visit AAFC website www.agr.gc.ca, and find the tab “Public Opinion and Consultations”. From there you can download the “Options Paper” and complete the online survey.

APAS in Action – Fall District Meetings

We are addressing these important policy topics and more at the 2013 fall district meetings. The fall district meetings are also featuring presentations from Farm Credit Canada, and the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency's Regional Offices to discuss the Agency's Water Drainage Consultation and the 25 Year Water Plan. We are also providing full updates on the Western Canadian Tree Nursery Coalition and the Community Pasture Patrons Association of Saskatchewan. The fall meetings are an excellent chance to get brought up to date on APAS activity, and engage with the many ongoing policy initiatives affecting Saskatchewan agriculture.