



Agriculture is Everyone's Business

Hon. Don Morgan Q.C.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Room 355, Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina, SK, S4S 0B3

February 21, 2018

Dear Minister Morgan:

On behalf of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS), I am writing to submit a resolution that was passed at the 2017 APAS Annual Meeting regarding biosecurity and land access.

From November 28 to 30, APAS Representatives gathered in Regina for their 2017 AGM. Over the course of the meeting, Representatives carried thirty-seven resolutions that fall under the responsibility of federal and provincial government departments, including the Ministry of Justice.

The resolution(s) that falls within the mandate of Ministry of Justice reads:

Biosecurity and Land Access

WHEREAS threats to biosecurity in the form of weed seeds and soil-borne pathogens, like clubroot, can be spread through the movement of contaminated soil, resulting in billions of dollars of potential financial losses to agricultural operations and the provincial economy;

WHEREAS the management of wildlife populations through hunting is important for maintaining sustainable populations and helping to protect against crop damage from wildlife;

WHEREAS updated hunting and service provider procedures now promote the communication between hunters and service providers with landowners to request permission for land access;

WHEREAS issues of nuisance and criminal offences, like illegal dumping, are becoming more common on agricultural lands;



BE IT RESOLVED that APAS call on the Government of Saskatchewan to take immediate action to make changes to trespass legislation and regulations to reflect the following principles;

- I. The legal definition of Civil trespass and access to farmland be covered under a single piece of provincial legislation
- II. That all enclosed private land be considered posted for all purposes
- III. All cultivated lands be considered posted for all purposes
- IV. That maximum fines for civil trespass increase to \$10,000

Biosecurity on agricultural operations represents a series of preventative measures designed to reduce the risk of transmission of weeds and infectious diseases. These protocols focus on preventing the entry of new diseases/species onto agricultural lands and controlling their spread. The most common vector for contamination is soil containing weed seeds as well as both active and dormant soilborne pathogens.

The recent confirmation of clubroot in crop districts 9A and 9B of Saskatchewan presents yet another serious risk to biosecurity in agriculture with major economic implications for the entire province. While producers are able to manage practices on their operations, they do not have adequate protections against the introduction of contaminants from third parties that enter agricultural lands illegally or are empowered to do so by legislation.

Additionally, access to agricultural and private lands in Saskatchewan is administered through numerous acts with varying levels of protection leading to confusion by both individuals trying to act in accordance with legislation and those sworn to enforce it. When compared to other provinces, land access is governed by fewer pieces legislation with greater consistency and adequate protections for agricultural lands. The simplification of land access into one piece of legislation would offer an opportunity to educate the public on biosecurity, trespass, and other growing concerns like the dumping of garbage in rural areas.

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan supports the adoption of land access legislation at an equivalent level to other Canadian provinces where all enclosed and cultivated agricultural lands are considered posted for all purposes with prohibited access. The implementation of a single act governing access would also improve understanding and provide consistent enforcement. Furthermore, the increasing financial risks to agriculture associated with biosecurity warrant an increase in the fines for trespass to levels observed in other provinces.

APAS looks forward to hearing your response to this resolution and the actions you plan to take to address our members' concerns. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

Todd Lewis
President

Cc: Honourable Lyle Stewart, Minister of Agriculture