



2019 APAS POLICY MANUAL





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The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan is instrumental in the development of innovative farm policy to both address many of the issues currently affecting agriculture and with a vision for creating new opportunities for Saskatchewan agricultural producers.

APAS policies are developed from resolutions, committees, and members. The purpose of this policy manual is to present, record and communicate existing policy and positions. The manual is updated annually to represent current APAS policy. Amendments are made to the manual when new policy is established by APAS.

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1. BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT

1.1 AGRICULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS

APAS supports the provision of agricultural funding through multi-year federal and provincial framework agreements. Agricultural policy frameworks should contribute towards a long-term vision for agriculture, while allowing for regional flexibility and the capacity to respond to short-term, and emerging needs. APAS believes that program initiatives providing direct and measurable benefits to primary producers should receive priority funding in recognition that primary agricultural production serves as the foundation of Canada's agri-food system.

1.2 BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS DESIGN

APAS supports the development and the design of Business Risk Management Programs that provide primary producers with the tools they need to affordably and effectively maintain income stability, promote flexibility and provide the liquidity needed to ensure farm businesses are adaptable to local, domestic and global market opportunities and challenges as they arise. Business Risk Management Programs need to be timely, transparent and predictable allowing for informed business decisions while also meeting emergency and disaster situations.

1.3 INCOME STABILIZATION PROGRAMS

Agricultural producers face significant economic and production risks outside of their immediate control. These risks can lead to wide fluctuations in producer income which threatens stability in the agricultural sector and broader economy. APAS supports effective income stabilization program capable of mitigating income loss associated with these risks. APAS supports income stabilization programs that are:

- Compliant with Canada's international trade obligations;
- Production neutral in their treatment of farm types;
- Reflective of the marketplace in terms of timing of payment and coverage levels;
- Simple and transparent in program administration and delivery; and
- Supportive of proactive forms of risk management, such as mixed farms and other forms of on-farm commodity diversification.

1.4 SELF-ADMINISTERED ACCOUNTS

APAS believes that investment matching risk management programs like Agri-Invest, should be maintained and enhanced. Specific enhancements should include:

- Development of an accelerator program to allow beginner producers to have higher matched contributions.

- Changes to Agri-Invest to increase overall government matching contributions and allow producers to withdraw their non-taxable funds.
- Revisions to Agri-Invest to allow for the exclusion of seed bundled chemical and technology use agreement costs when reporting allowable commodity purchases for Agri-Invest purposes.

1.5 PRODUCTION INSURANCE

Crop insurance is a very important tool for Saskatchewan producers in managing production risks. APAS supports the following principles to guide the development and delivery of production insurance programs:

- The administration and delivery of the program should be as simple and transparent as possible for both the Corporation and producers;
- The program must offer affordable and effective options for producers;
- The program must be market neutral;
- The program must effectively reflect the costs-of-production; and
- Sufficient funds must be made available to meet the needs of the program.

In accordance with the above principles, APAS continually assesses current crop insurance programs in close consultations with members and representatives. APAS supports the following changes to current Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation programming:

- Use of premium and coverage incentives to provide incentives for producers who utilize best management practices and crop rotations that reflect the need for enhanced biosecurity and disease management.
- Implementation of an advance payment program for insurance indemnities when producers are granted an extension of insurance contract on unharvested production.
- Adjustment of quality grading factors over and above CGC grades to ensure insurance quality coverage is consistent with the appraised value in the marketplace.
- Transfer of final decision-making authority from the SCIC Board of Directors to the Crop Insurance Appeal Panel which includes producer members at large.
- Extension of the eligibility period under the unseeded acreage (too wet to seed) program from one year to five years or until such time that a solution is found to recurring flooding in terminal basin areas.

1.6 DISASTER PROGRAMS

APAS supports a targeted disaster program that is adequately funded by the provincial and federal governments. These disasters could be natural (prolonged droughts, wide-scale flooding,

frosts) or man-made (trade challenges or trade barriers). When additional funds are allocated in disaster programming, they should:

- Be clearly defined as disaster related and come from outside the existing safety net programs.
- Adequately address the needs, be delivered in the year needed, and should treat all producers equitably.
- Include the deferral of tax liabilities which may be incurred as a result of the forced liquidation of livestock.

1.7 PAYMENT ASSURANCE

APAS supports the establishment of effective and credible payment assurance programs to protect producers against payment default. APAS supports changes to the CGC's payment protection program to expand the protection coverage to all buyers and commodities. In recognition that producers ultimately bear the cost of any resulting payment protection program, APAS supports payment protection programs coverage that are cost effective, transparent and offer coverage over a reasonable time period with a minimal deductible.

1.8 ADVANCED PAYMENTS

APAS supports maintaining the Advance Payment Program to help producers market their products and meet their payment obligations in a timely fashion. APAS supports an increase to the interest-free portion and the overall limit of advanced payments to ensure the program keeps pace with rising production costs and to reflect the diversified nature of farm operations. APAS believes that Advance Payment limits should be set by each commodity type produced by the farm enterprise to ensure diversified farms have equitable access to the Advance Payment Program.

1.9 INFORMED DECISIONS

APAS supports governments, agencies and financial lenders in providing ongoing producer education to enhance farm management skills and increase an individual agricultural producer's ability to manage business and production risk.

APAS supports producers having timely, accurate, and readily accessible information available on the pricing of farm commodities so that informed marketing decisions can be made.

2. CROPS AND MARKETING

2.1 CANADIAN GRAIN COMMISSION

APAS supports a Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) mandate that works in the interests of grain producers. The CGC must be provided with adequate resources to deliver producer protection in areas of grain grading, weights and measures, payment protection, dispute resolution and access to transportation. APAS believes CGC services provided in the public good, such as market development, grains research, statistics, and monitoring of food safety, should be funded by government.

2.2 GRADE ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY

APAS supports periodic reviews of Canada's grading and quality assurance systems to ensure that the grain quality grading factors used at primary elevators are consistent with the quality requirements of end-use customers. Producers and farm organizations must have meaningful representation on all grain quality reviews and standard setting processes.

APAS supports the development and introduction of new grading techniques that reduce industry's reliance on the use of subjective methods of assessing quality. APAS believes the grading system must evolve with the introduction of new techniques (like the Hagberg falling number) to enhance the accuracy and reliability of quality assessment. APAS believes that changes to Canada's grain classification system must maintain or enhance Canada's reputation as a supplier of high-quality grain. Canada's classification system for grain must also be flexible to accommodate evolving customer and producer preferences.

APAS believes that all elevator agents who grade grain at primary elevators need to complete a mandatory certification/training program to ensure consistency, quality control and price fairness for producers.

2.3 VARIETAL REGISTRATION

APAS supports a registration system for new varieties that subjects candidate varieties to high agronomic, disease, and quality standards, while providing sufficient flexibility to accommodate evolving market demand and producer preferences. APAS believes that any reductions in supervised trial requirements, merit, or quality assessment must be directly approved by a recommending body that is accountable to producers.

APAS believes that crop varieties that continue to meet both the agronomic needs of producers and the market requirements of grain buyers must continue to remain available for future use.



As such, APAS supports additional oversight of the variety registration system to ensure marketable varieties are not prematurely de-registered in order to force producers onto a “variety treadmill.”

2.4 MARKETING CONTRACTS

APAS supports the development of standardized grain contracts to improve commercial accountability between producers and grain buyers. These contracts should follow a standardized format to clarify the obligations and responsibilities agreed between the two parties. A standardized contract should also include reciprocal penalties for non-performance.

2.5 MARKETING TRANSPARENCY

APAS supports Canada imposing reporting requirements on grain exports similar to those that exist in the United States. Information such as forward export sales, vessel lineups and port unloading are necessary to enable producers and other market participants to make informed marketing decisions and to assess overall system performance.

APAS believes grain buyers should be required list all handling, elevation and basis costs as separate line items on cash grain purchase tickets.

2.6 CROP DISEASE MANAGEMENT

APAS believes that a fully funded disease surveillance, mapping and prevention program is required to prevent the spread of clubroot and other crop diseases. This includes a province wide approach to regulation and reporting of club root which includes all municipalities. APAS supports the development of new clubroot and fusarium resistant varieties that have competitive agronomic traits to mitigate known and emerging production disease risk.

2.7 ON FARM SEED TREATMENT

APAS believes that producers must retain the opportunity to purchase seed treatment products and treat seed on farm.

2.8 SEED PURITY

APAS supports periodic review of seed standards to ensure tolerances for weed seeds and other foreign material are consistent with modern seed cleaning technology.



APAS supports changes to the Seeds Act that would require a mandatory declaration stating weed species and quantity present in the seed lot so producers can make informed choices when selecting and purchasing certified seed.

3. TRANSPORTATION

3.1 RAILWAYS MONITORING

APAS supports the creation of a third-party oversight body to assess ongoing operations within the grain handling and transportation system. This oversight body must include representation from agricultural producers who ultimately bear the cost associated with inadequate planning and capacity shortfalls.

3.2 RAILWAY PENALTIES AND PERFORMANCE

APAS supports the use of government mandated performance targets when rail service is found to be damaging producer incomes and undermining Canada's reputation as a reliable grain exporter. Volume requirements must be set in accordance with corridor demand and regional stocks. The commercial needs of small shippers, including producer cars and short lines, must also be accommodated. Penalties for non-performance must be enforced and of sufficient amount to serve as an effective deterrence.

3.3 MAXIMUM REVENUE ENTITLEMENT

APAS supports the Maximum Revenue Entitlement (MRE) to ensure the railways are compensated fairly and producers are protected from excessive freight rates in a rail environment.

3.4 RAILWAY COSTING REVIEW

Railway costs for grain movement have not been fully reviewed since 1992. Since then, elevator consolidation, siding closures and the trend towards multi-car blocks have created efficiencies that would, under effective competition, translate into lower freight costs for producers. APAS supports a full and transparent costing review to update the railway costing used to calculate the Maximum Revenue Entitlement.

3.5 RAILWAY COMPETITION

APAS supports legislative measures to increase competition in Canada's freight market, including expanded interswitching limits and the application of open running rights provisions as set out in the *Canada Transportation Act*.



3.6 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

APAS believes that shippers, including producer car shippers, must have access to a responsive and meaningful dispute resolution processes to resolve rate and service issues. Service level agreements must also clarify mutual service obligations and include reciprocal penalties for non-performance.

3.7 PORTS

APAS supports the maintenance of the Port of Churchill and Hudson Bay Rail Line as a cost-effective shipping alternative for Saskatchewan producers.

3.8 RAIL LINE ABANDONMENT

APAS believes that interested parties must be provided legitimate and meaningful opportunities to purchase unused rail lines and sidings. Canada Transportation Agency should also be empowered to investigate and rule on a railway's genuine commercial interest in rail lines to ensure that unused track can quickly move through the abandonment process and be put up for commercial sale.

3.9 PRODUCER CAR LOADING AND SHORTLINE RAIL

APAS supports the right to order and load producer cars being maintained in the *Canada Grains Act*. APAS believes government transportation policy should encourage and support producer car loading as a cost effective and environmentally sound shipping alternative.

APAS supports government and legislative initiatives aimed at promoting shortline rail in the province. APAS also supports a Provincial Sales Tax (PST) exemption for shortline railways purchases, in recognition that they are unable to recapture costs in the same manner as Class 1 Carriers.

4. LIVESTOCK

4.1 LIVESTOCK STRATEGY

Saskatchewan is Canada’s second largest beef producing province with 37% of Canada’s total pastureland. Our province remains an ideal location for livestock production and the sector is a key source of innovation and diversification for our agricultural industry. Despite excellent market conditions and returns for producers in recent years, investment in the expansion of the beef herd has remained stagnant and the provincial beef herd itself has declined. In the interest of building and expanding a strong and sustainable livestock industry for the future of Saskatchewan agriculture, APAS supports the development of a provincial livestock strategy to stop the decline in Saskatchewan’s livestock herd, nurture growth and expand the industry for the future.

4.2 MARKETING

APAS supports marketing systems for cattle and other livestock that are open, transparent, and competitive. APAS also contends a full network of livestock auction markets must be maintained to ensure market access is located within reasonable proximity to the distribution of cattle production in Saskatchewan. APAS supports government incentives and reducing barriers to entry for farmers that want to pool resources and start-up farmer owned auction marts.

4.3 PAYMENT ASSURANCE

APAS supports a payment protection program for livestock that adequately protects producers from payment default and assures compensation at prices that reflect market value.

4.4 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

APAS supports the right for agricultural operations to be sited and ongoing normal agricultural activities protected within the Agricultural Statement of Provincial Interest, provided all provincial provisions, plans and approvals are in place in accordance with the *Agricultural Operations Act*.

4.5 SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

APAS supports the supply management system and its main components, including import control, production discipline and cost of production assurance.



4.6 CROWN LAND LEASING AND SALES

APAS supports that government decisions about the future of Crown land leases should include meaningful and respectful consultation with lease holders, conservation groups, municipalities, and producer organizations.

APAS supports the recent legislative changes allowing Saskatchewan lease holders to pledge their Crown leases as financial security against loans. APAS supports a policy framework enabling this provision that is transparent and easy to use while remaining consistent with the many environmental and economic benefits that Crown grazing land provides the agricultural sector and people of Saskatchewan.

APAS does not support Crown leaseholders being coerced into purchasing Crown land, through financial incentives and penalties.

APAS supports the waiving or adjusting of Crown lease fees for lands impacted by natural disasters including fire and flooding until the lands productive capability is again realized.

APAS supports Crown lease rates fully reflecting additional conservation, public access (including recreation and hunting) and reporting requirements imposed on leaseholders.

4.7 PROVINCIAL AND PFRA PASTURE TRANSITION

APAS believes that the transition of the former Saskatchewan pastures program and PFRA pastures must meet the economic requirements of the pasture patrons while maintaining a high level of professional management needed to ensure the integrity of the grasslands and the environmental and conservation legacy inherent in the previously run federal and provincial pastures.

APAS supports sustainable transition to patron governance such that 50 years from now multiple producers in a community can still run cattle on these Crown lands at an affordable rate with minimal barriers to entry and exit.

4.8 DISEASE SURVEILLANCE, MANAGEMENT AND QUARANTINE

APAS supports increased federal and provincial funding for research, surveillance and development of management plans for any disease considered transmittable to livestock.



APAS supports financial support for producers under infectious disease quarantine through programs such as the Advance Payment Program to ensure producers can meet their near-term cash flow requirements.

4.9 MEAT PROCESSING

APAS supports streamlining meat inspection services in Saskatchewan to ensure food quality and safety standards are maintained and to eliminate duplication and confusion. APAS also supports a provincial meat inspection system that accommodates the commercial needs of all Saskatchewan abattoirs. Local abattoirs provide an important service to agricultural producers and local economies. Access to on-farm slaughter, custom cut and wrap services, as well as the retail sale of local meat products, provide opportunities to market directly to consumers and showcase local food production. Local abattoirs are often a preferred market destination for small shipments of livestock, including cull cattle, which are otherwise uneconomical to transport long distances to market. Saskatchewan has limited slaughter capacity relative to the size of our provincial beef herd. It's important that we maintain our existing network of slaughter facilities in the province.

5. FARM INPUTS

5.1 FARM INPUT PRICE DISCOVERY

Producers currently lack access to independent, timely and accurate price information for fertilizers, crop protection products and other basic farm inputs. APAS supports the development of tools and processes, such as the former Saskatchewan farm input price survey, to ensure producers across Saskatchewan have the information to manage their input costs.

5.2 STREAMLINED REGULATORY PROCESSES

APAS supports streamlined, timely and efficient processes for registration of generic crop and livestock protection products that are proven safe and effective so that reduced input costs can be realized.

5.3 COMPETITION

APAS supports protecting producers against excessive or monopolistic pricing of privately developed technologies. Canada's Competition Bureau must be provided the legislative authority and resources to review proposed mergers and acquisitions to prevent business practices that would lessen competition in the agriculture input industry.

6. RESEARCH AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

6.1 GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs)

APAS supports the federal and provincial governments conducting a scientific and evidence-based approach to biotechnology regulations. APAS supports consumer education to create awareness and trust of biotechnology.

6.2 PLANT BREEDERS RIGHTS

APAS supports farmers' rights to retain seed from a protected variety for their own use without paying additional royalties. Protected varieties must be available to researchers for further varietal development.

6.3 PUBLIC SECTOR LED RESEARCH

APAS believes that agricultural research is critical to the economic and environmental viability of the agricultural sector. APAS supports a strong and continuing public presence in agricultural research to ensure the knowledge and technology generated through research is maintained in the public realm and available to all producers. Agricultural research programs must be provided with stable and predictable funding, focusing on both discovery science and applied research outcomes.

6.4 PRODUCER LED RESEARCH

APAS believes that producers must be involved in setting research agendas and informing industry, government and other partners of the research needs in primary agriculture. APAS supports producer investment in research through checkoffs, provided the organizations administering these funds remain producer driven and accountable to those paying the check-off.

6.5 UNIVERSITY LED RESEARCH

APAS recognizes the important role of university led research in maintaining Saskatchewan's status as a world leader in agricultural science and innovation. APAS supports universities being provided with adequate funding to attract and retain competent scientists and agricultural researchers.

7. BIOSECURITY AND PEST MANAGEMENT

7.1 LAND ACCESS

APAS supports recent changes to trespass laws that require landowner permission before individuals can access privately held or leased Crown land thereby reducing biosecurity risks, property damage and rural crime.

APAS supports increased clarity over the roles of the Federal Government (federally regulated industries such as pipelines and railways), the Provincial Government (the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Highways), municipalities and individual landowners in the control of crop disease and prohibited or noxious weeds.

APAS also supports all service providers and third-party contractors being required to have a valid work order, personal identification, clearly displayed company logos and following site-specific biosecurity protocols when conducting work on rural properties.

7.2 PEST MANAGEMENT PRODUCT REGISTRATION

APAS supports a science-based regulatory system for crop protection products that is efficient, safeguards public safety, and the environment and protects human health while providing agricultural producers with the necessary pest control tools. APAS also supports fast-tracked testing and registration of foreign crop protection products that are proven to be safe and more effective than products currently available on the Canadian market.

7.3 RAT CONTROL

APAS supports the Province of Saskatchewan fully funding the Provincial Rat Control Program through the Pest Control Program.

7.4 GOPHER CONTROL

Uncontrolled Richardson's Ground Squirrel populations cause a large productivity loss to forage and crops. APAS supports the continued use of Strychnine and its associated end-use products until viable alternatives are found and encourages active research and development of viable, effective and economic alternatives to Strychnine.



7.5 WILDLIFE DAMAGE COMPENSATION

The current Saskatchewan Wildlife Damage Compensation Program is primarily geared towards preventing damage to crops and feed supplies. APAS supports compensation applying when wildlife damage fences thereby allowing livestock to access fields resulting in crop damage.

APAS supports producers being provided full commercial compensation for livestock loss due to wildlife predators.

8. TRADE

8.1 TRADE DISRUPTION & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

APAS recognizes the World Trade Organization as the appropriate international governing body for establishing trade laws. If trade disruptions are found to have injured an agricultural sector, APAS supports funds raised through retaliatory tariffs or penalties being made available to the affected industry for research and market development initiatives.

APAS supports clear, transparent and timely mechanics for trade dispute resolution.

8.2 INTERNATIONAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

APAS believes that the Canadian government should approach international trade agreements focused on achieving positive economic results for agricultural producers. Trade agreements should also be negotiated in an open and transparent manner with meaningful input from affected stakeholders.

APAS supports bilateral, multilateral and regional trade agreements that strengthen trade ties with key customers of Canadian agriculture.

8.3 INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

APAS supports provincial and federal efforts to eliminate trade barriers and harmonize interprovincial trade laws.

9. FARM FINANCE AND TAXATION

9.1 FUEL TAX EXEMPTION

Recognizing that the majority of farm fuel is consumed off road, APAS supports maintaining the Farm Fuel Tax Exemption Program to ensure that producers are not paying more than their fair share for the maintenance and improvement of Saskatchewan’s road infrastructure.

APAS also supports a PST exemption for:

- Farm business and farm machinery insurance premiums;
- Construction and service contracts on farm buildings and related properties; and
- Fuel and railway inputs used by provincially regulated short line railways.

9.2 TAX DEFERRAL

APAS supports changes to the *Income Tax Act* that allow producers to report their income over multiple years for tax purposes. APAS supports the “Cash Ticket Deferral” provisions within the *Income Tax Act*, and further believes that the *Income Tax Act* should be changed to grant livestock producers and other commodities equal opportunity to defer income into the next tax year to manage cash flow and defer tax liabilities.

9.3 MORTGAGE TERMS

APAS supports revised mortgage terms allowing for extended amortization periods to lower yearly cash flow requirements

9.4 INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSFERS

APAS supports the reduction of tax barriers to intergenerational farm transfers. APAS believes that farm owners should be able to transfer privately owned farmland to family members without triggering excessive and unfair taxes.

Most farms are family owned businesses and APAS supports the availability of succession planning resources to ensure that farm families have the knowledge and professional support in place to assist the transfer of farm assets between generations.

10. PROPERTY RIGHTS AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

10.1 AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SASKATCHEWAN

APAS supports producers right to farm if they follow acceptable farming practices. Producers need to be allowed to use accepted and standard farming and ranching practices in both existing and new operations without unreasonable regulation or nuisance complaints even as urban encroachment occurs.

APAS supports Saskatchewan being a favorable jurisdiction for increased livestock production to meet growing demand. APAS further supports consistent predictable municipal zoning and permitting that is fully aligned with and supported by approvals issued under the *Agricultural Operations Act*.

APAS supports all bylaws and planning documents developed and approved under the *Planning and Development Act, 2007* aligning and being consistent with approved Statements of Provincial Interest.

10.2 PROPERTY RIGHTS ADVOCATE

APAS supports the establishment of an independent Property Rights Advocate Office in Saskatchewan where producers can go to access information and obtain legal support when dealing with development on their agricultural property.

10.3 RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT REGULATION

APAS supports a strong legislative and regulatory framework that ensures resource development on farmland poses minimal disruptions for the environment, farm operations and rural residents. APAS supports development of new legislation to replace the current *Surface Rights and Acquisitions Act* of 1978. Environmental approval of resource development projects should also be contingent on an assessment process that fully addresses the concerns that farmers and ranchers may have with resource development occurring on their lands and in close proximity to their private dwellings. Government regulators must be provided with the staff, resources, and legal authority to promptly respond to the environmental, health and safety concerns of producers and other rural residents.

10.4 THIRD PARTY INFRASTRUCTURE

APAS supports new legislation governing third-party infrastructure and developments on private farmland including renewable energy projects, power and transmission lines (both Crown corporation and privately held), pipelines and wells, that sets out landowner rights, acquisition



and development processes, minimum compensation levels and an effective dispute resolution process to minimize nuisance and economic loss to landowners.

10.5 RECLAMATION OF OIL AND GAS SITES

APAS supports the Provincial Government monitoring oil and gas wells in Saskatchewan to ensure prompt reclamation of suspended, abandoned and orphaned well sites.

APAS supports the creation of a fund to compensate producers when oil and gas operators become insolvent or are unwilling or unable to fulfill their lease obligations.

10.6 ENERGY PIPELINES

APAS supports the expansion of energy pipelines as a means of increasing rail capacity for agricultural commodities that cannot be transported by pipeline. APAS also supports the use of the Hudson Bay Railway to Churchill as an Arctic Gateway Pipeline Corridor.

11. WATER MANAGEMENT

11.1 WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

APAS supports the implementation of a comprehensive water management strategy for agriculture to enhance the producers to deal with periods of excess moisture or drought while limiting the adverse impact. Water management strategies should be developed in accordance with the following principles:

- Resources need to be allocated for continued mapping and modelling of water basins.
- Sufficient resources must be allocated to administration and regulation.
- Economic support for landowners that manage water for the public good, by storing or retaining water.
- Adequate support for watershed community organizations to perform coordination activities.

Agricultural producers must be fully engaged and consulted in the development of provincial water management regulation, conservation and development policies.

11.2 WATER MANAGEMENT APPEALS

APAS supports an appeal mechanism, such as the former Water Appeal Board, so that rural municipalities and agricultural producers, can effectively appeal Water Security Agency rulings.

11.3 WATER DEVELOPMENT

APAS believes that construction and maintenance of small and medium sized water retention structures is important for livestock, crop production and rural resident's domestic water supplies. Increased investment is required in technical advice and programs to ensure agricultural producers can fully utilize surface water resources in rural Saskatchewan. As well, adequate federal and provincial programs need to be in place to maintain and further develop surface water resources for rural Saskatchewan.

APAS further supports that all former PFRA dams transitioned to the province's Water Security Agency need to be refurbished and maintained for irrigation, rural and agricultural use.

12. CLIMATE CHANGE, ADAPTATION AND CONSERVATION

12.1 CARBON TAX

APAS believes that governments need to recognize the unique impacts of policy proposals like carbon taxes on the agricultural sector, including the negative impacts on our ability to compete internationally and the potential disincentive to produce food that the world needs.

APAS opposes the imposition of a carbon tax on fuel and other agricultural inputs and further supports that agricultural producers receiving adequate compensation to offset additional carbon related expenses, if a tax is imposed.

12.2 CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

Agriculture is one of the sectors that is most vulnerable to climate change and needs tools to adapt. APAS supports research into all aspects of adapting to climate change, including improved crop varieties, livestock feed, nutrient management, soil science, and water management.

Research into management practices that maximize carbon sequestration in hay and pasture lands as well as on environmental acres including treed areas and wetlands is required. APAS supports longer term research such as the Prairie Soil Carbon Balance Project to determine the carbon sinks and total carbon stock achieved for crops, forages and grasslands and the related agricultural management practices.

Research to identify carbon inputs related to agricultural production and the level of agricultural carbon sinks achieved by producers is required. In this way, the benefits related to western Canadian agricultural production can be reflected within carbon policy.

Historically plant breeding has not identified the potential for carbon sequestration as a preferred factor for the development of crop varieties. APAS supports targeted research in the development of crop varieties that increase carbon sequestration through innovations such as enhanced root mass and increased photosynthetic efficiency.

12.3 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

APAS views incentives as the most effective way of encouraging the implementation of practices and technologies that reduce carbon emissions. APAS supports the development of Farm Stewardship funding for Best Management Practices that enhance and support agricultural producers to:

- Retain and enhance carbon sinks like wetlands, trees and grasslands;



- Adopt management practices that enhance carbon sequestration;
- Implement climate change adaptation measures such as flood and drought proofing; and
- Encourage innovation in dealing with adaptation and carbon management.

12.4 CARBON OFFSETS

APAS supports the development of a voluntary carbon offset program that reflects the principles of:

- Providing meaningful recognition of agricultural activities that offset carbon;
- Providing financial support for maintenance of existing carbon sinks such as wetlands, forests, and grasslands;
- Demonstrating an effective and cost-efficient verification system;
- Providing a fair price to producers for voluntary sequestration or emission reductions;
- Allowing for producers to monetize, stack and directly sell credits; and
- Reflecting the diversity of different agricultural sectors.

12.5 ECOLOGICAL GOODS AND SERVICES

Agricultural producers are the largest group of private sector land managers in Canada, and their property provides many of the environmental goods and services enjoyed by society. APAS supports conservation approach that includes financial support to farmers providing these public goods and services.

APAS supports the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) model that provides economic incentives for environmental stewardship projects, including wetland retention and restoration, shelterbelts, grassing and native prairie establishment, stream channel and riparian restoration and stabilization, wildlife habitat, soil conservation and fishery habitat projects.

12.6 CROSS FENCING AS AN ELIGIBLE BMP

APAS supports cross fencing as a Beneficial Management Practice (BMP) for cost shared funding under the Farm Stewardship programming.

12.7 CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

APAS believes that conservation easement holders must be held responsible for the cost of managing water, maintaining culverts and providing storm surge holding capacity to avoid flooding of adjacent lands and roadways.



12.8 AGRO-FORESTRY

Shelterbelts provide environmental benefits enjoyed by society, including soil conservation, wildlife habitat preservation, and enhanced carbon sequestration. APAS supports a publicly funded shelterbelt centre to provide producers in Western Canada access to a reliable source of affordable trees.

13. BEGINNING FARMERS

13.1 PROGRAMS FOR LAND PURCHASE

APAS supports the establishment of policies and programs, by the federal and provincial governments, that would help young producers purchase land including reduced requirements for down payments. APAS also supports incentives to encourage sellers to sell land to new industry entrants and increasing the capital gain exemption threshold to \$2,000,000 for farmers and ranchers who sell their lands to new industry entrants.

13.2 BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT FOR NEW ENTRANTS

New agricultural entrants often begin and grow their operation by working with family. Although they often share assets and operate separate businesses, with no ownership stake in each other's production, they are found ineligible for the Advance Payment Program. This program helps all producers, especially beginning farmers, manage their production and marketing needs, through the provision of low cost and interest free loans. APAS supports expanded access to the Advance Payment Program for new entrants. APAS further supports the increase of the interest free portion of the Advance payments Program from \$100,000 to \$200,000.

APAS supports an Agri-Invest program that would increase the level of government matching contributions for producers reporting lower allowable net sales.

13.3 FARM MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP SKILL DEVELOPMENT

APAS believes that farm management education programs and workshops help producers, both young and old, manage their business risk and benefit industry as a whole. APAS supports agencies such as crop insurance and farm lenders providing incentives to producers for their participation in farm management and risk management education programs. As well, APAS believes that it is important for young and beginning producers to have opportunities to develop leadership skills by participating in farm and commodity organizations.

14. AGRICULTURAL AWARENESS AND FOOD SAFETY

14.1 FOOD CURRICULUM

APAS recognizes the importance of maintaining the consumer's trust in the capabilities and products of Saskatchewan agricultural producers. As well, technological advances and breakthroughs in recent years are often relatively unknown to the general public, or are misunderstood by consumers, leading to concerns or uncertainty over production practices or food safety. APAS advocates for positive agricultural awareness in the media for established scientific agricultural practices and new technology that will advance the industry.

It is important that Saskatchewan students have a clear understanding of where the food they eat comes from, how it is grown, and the steps taken to ensure that it is safe and nutritious. APAS supports agriculture and food production being formally incorporated within the Saskatchewan school curriculum. APAS supports training of teachers on agricultural food production practices and building agricultural examples throughout the K-12 curriculum.

14.2 FOOD STANDARDS AND LABELLING

APAS supports the Canadian Food Inspection Agency using equivalent standards of inspection for imported and exported food. APAS supports harmonization of inspection regulations with other countries, provided this does not result in a reduction of Canadian food safety standards.

APAS supports agricultural products produced, marketed, and sold within Saskatchewan as organic must conform to the nationally recognized production standards set out in the CFIA's Canadian Organic Standards.

14.3 FOOD SAFETY

APAS believes that producers must be involved in setting the agenda and vision for food safety planning. The agriculture sector must play a strong role in implementation, delivery, and promotion of food safety programs. As food safety concerns are shared by society, society must be prepared to share in the costs of implementing and maintaining food safety programs.

15. WORKPLACE SAFETY AND LABOUR

15.1 FARM SAFETY

APAS commits to working with government and industry to develop farm safety programming and planning for the benefit of farmers in Saskatchewan. APAS believes that sustained public awareness campaigns must emphasize education, best practices and the promotion of safe work culture on Saskatchewan farms.

APAS supports and acknowledges the role of the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) and the Agricultural Health and Safety Network in Saskatchewan in researching, promoting and evaluating farm safety in Saskatchewan.

15.2 DISABILITIES ON THE FARM

Having disability supports in place, should a producer be injured, has the potential to lessen the impact and emotional trauma associated with the disability and possibly allow for the agricultural business to continue. APAS supports the objectives and work undertaken by the Canadian Farmers with Disabilities Registry to lessen the physical and mental health issues for farmers and farm families dealing with an injury.

15.3 MENTAL HEALTH

APAS recognizes that farm stress and suicide is of real concern to producers. APAS supports increased mental health programs in rural Saskatchewan and partners with the Do More Agriculture Foundation in the shared goal of advancing mental health and well-being of Canadian producers.

15.4 FARM LABOUR

APAS works with government and advocates for policies to address the acute labour and training shortages that exist in Saskatchewan agriculture. APAS supports changes to the Provincial Nominee Program and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program that provide Saskatchewan producers better access to foreign labour sources, for all agricultural commodity groups, when domestic labour sources are not attainable. APAS also supports a more streamlined application and approval process focused on the unique needs of agriculture.

APAS supports the development of an agricultural training and certification program to provide employee skills and training specific to primary agricultural production.



APAS supports the work of the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council and acknowledges the important work they are doing in moving forward with a Workforce Action Plan to address agricultural labour issues in Canada.

16. RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

16.1 ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

APAS supports improvement and maintenance of Saskatchewan's road infrastructure to meet the social, economic and product transportation needs of rural residents.

16.2 WEATHER RADAR

Monitoring and predicting weather is an increasingly important risk management tool for Saskatchewan farm operations. APAS supports all agricultural regions in the province having access to a functional, accurate and reliable weather radar system.

16.3 WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

APAS supports continued refurbishment and maintenance of existing federal and provincial waterworks and the development of new dams and water retention works to stabilize and help drought proof rural Saskatchewan. APAS further supports increased investment in new water supplies, storage and conveyance to increase prairie resilience to climatic changes.

16.4 AGRICULTURAL WASTE PRODUCTS

APAS believes that an expanded agricultural recycling program is needed to encourage sustainable and environmentally sound management practices. APAS supports enhancements to Saskatchewan recycling systems that provide producers convenient access to recycling services for tires, containers, unused chemicals, oil, plastic grain bags, twine/net wrap and other on farm waste products.

16.5 VOICE SERVICES AND BROADBAND INTERNET

APAS believes that access to voice services, data and broadband internet is an essential tool for primary agriculture to fully participate in the global marketplace. Being fully connected is essential for day to day GPS crop related operations, on site machinery repairs, timely marketing and operator safety. APAS supports federal and provincial regulation and investments to improve voice services and high-speed internet access in rural areas

APAS supports there being a CRTC Commissioner representing Saskatchewan's interests to ensure that decisions on funding, infrastructure development and policies reflect the importance of voice, data and broadband internet services in rural Saskatchewan.



16.6 NATURAL GAS

APAS supports the expansion of the Saskatchewan natural gas network, through program incentives that: foster economic investment; increase energy efficiency; and, reduce the carbon footprint at the farm gate.

16.7 RURAL SERVICES

APAS believes that reasonable proximity to schools, hospitals and other government services is required to sustain a vibrant and thriving agricultural community in Saskatchewan. APAS encourages provincial standards for school bus travel to ensure no elementary school students spend more than two hours per day on the school bus. APAS also supports sustained investment in social infrastructure to make rural Saskatchewan a more attractive place to live and raise a family.

16.8 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

APAS supports emergency preparedness for producers and communities. Having an emergency plan and having the plan communicated is essential to react should an emergency arise.

APAS supports the use of standardized signs for rural roads and rural residences allowing for accurate and timely emergency response.

APAS supports STARS ambulance as a critical service for rural Saskatchewan.

APAS advocates for enhanced ambulance services capable of servicing rural Saskatchewan under adverse weather and road conditions.

APAS supports the continued focus on improved rural policing.