



## **Rotating picket lines at Co-op cardlocks threaten to delay spring seeding**

APAS warns of disruptions to seeding after farmers' access to fuel delayed

May 8, 2020 (Regina, SK) – The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) is raising concerns about disrupted access to cardlocks and rural fuel supplies due to the ongoing labour dispute between Co-op and Unifor. Farmers raised the alarm after a recent picket line made it difficult to access a Co-op site in Moose Jaw this week.

“Our members have a very short window in which to seed our 2020 crop, and this year many producers are still racing to complete their 2019 harvest,” explains APAS President Todd Lewis, who farms near Gray, SK. “In the face of COVID-19, we’re already dealing with a very tenuous food supply situation in Canada and around the world. The very last thing that farmers need right now is to have seeding compromised by not been able to get fuel.”

Lewis notes that many producers rely on cardlock stations their primary source of fuel. “In many cases farmers replenish their fuel supply daily and traveling long distances to avoid picket lines is not an option,” he continues. “This is not a matter of convenience. It’s been a cool wet spring in many areas, and producers are watching their window for optimum seeding conditions start to close.”

APAS asks that parties on both sides of the dispute work together to ensure that the critical fuel supply to Saskatchewan’s economic engine be maintained at this crucial moment in the growing season.

“Saskatchewan producers are not in a position to weigh in on or resolve the dispute between union and management,” Lewis concludes. “But disrupting our essential fuel supply at a critical, time-sensitive period for agriculture is not to anyone’s advantage.”

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**Background:** APAS is Saskatchewan’s general farm organization – formed to provide farmers and ranchers with a democratically elected, grassroots, non-partisan, producer-run organization based on rural municipal boundaries. As the united voice of thousands of agricultural producers and ranchers in Saskatchewan, we strive to represent the views of a wide variety of agricultural stakeholders in order to form comprehensive policies that can benefit all sectors of society. APAS is a member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.