



Agriculture Needs Your Voice & Vote

October 5, 2015 – For Immediate Release – The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) is encouraging voting-age farming and ranching residents in Saskatchewan to exercise their right to cast a vote on October 19 during the Federal Election.

“Saskatchewan agriculture must have Federal support to overcome some hurdles that farmers cannot overcome on their own,” says Norm Hall, APAS President. “In the “Ask Your Candidate” list, APAS listed five topics of significance to producers – risk management, rail transportation, water management, competitiveness and labour. The Federal Government has a substantial role in each area and we need their support to be successful and continue to contribute to the national economy.”

Hall continues, noting that “Agriculture is a solid contributor to the national economy accounting for 9% of GDP, 2.4 million jobs and exporting \$26.5 billion. For everyday citizens, food, on average, accounts for only 10.4% of disposable income. This year, Food Freedom Day was February 6. Thirty-seven days of income to purchase food products for 365 days. Clearly agriculture is a national strength.”

Business risk management under Growing Forward 3 is currently being discussed and will be in place by 2018. The Canada Transportation Act Review report will be submitted in December 2015 and the entire agricultural industry needs to understand future adjustments to reduce producer losses and ensure products are moved to the right customer in the time prescribed in a convenient safe manner. Weather volatility has raised the profile of water. Collaboratively, Federal and Provincial Governments, farmers, ranchers and related organizations need to reduce damage, minimize lost acres and preserve a highly variable resource - water. Competitiveness is a growing issue as United States farmers have the ability to reduce their cost of production versus Canada using the same product in both countries. Farmers and ranchers need labour and need the ability to access out-of-country workers to achieve full production potential.

“APAS encourages anyone involved in farming and ranching to be informed about the national agriculture policy and to vote in a manner that will benefit the agriculture industry,” says Hall. “We also have the responsibility to cast our vote every election. That is one of the values of being a Canadian citizen – to freely vote for the person and party we believe will benefit the country, economy and agriculture. Be informed, exercise your responsibility, and cast your vote on October 19.”

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APAS is Saskatchewan's general farm organization formed to provide farmers and ranchers with a democratically elected, grassroots, non-partisan, producer organization based on rural municipal boundaries. As the united voice of thousands of agricultural producers 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.