



APAS to address House of Commons Agriculture Committee

APAS President will make recommendations to Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

June 9, 2020 (Regina, SK) – After weeks of fierce advocacy on behalf of Saskatchewan’s agricultural producers during COVID-19, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) will have the opportunity to address the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food on **Friday, June 12 at 3:00-4:00 pm EDT (1:00-2:00 pm CST)**.

APAS President Todd Lewis will present recommendations for changes to Business Risk Management (BRM) programs, including an increase to AgriStability coverage levels and an elimination of the Reference Margin Limit.

“COVID-19 has made it clear that the BRM programs designed to help farmers in a crisis just aren’t working,” says Mr. Lewis from his farm near Gray, SK. “We need to see real change, and I’m excited for the opportunity to speak to decision makers about how they can make meaningful improvements to the system.”

APAS has been vocal about the need to reform to Canada’s BRM programs since 2013, when significant changes were made to AgriStability, the main program designed to provide support to farmers facing income declines. Although farm incomes in Saskatchewan have declined steadily since 2015, fewer than half of eligible producers are currently enrolled in AgriStability.

“Producers have largely given up on the program,” says Lewis, going on to explain that low coverage levels, administrative barriers, and unequal coverage to certain types of farms (including livestock and mixed farm operations) have resulted in low participation. Although the program has been under review for three years, no changes have been made.

APAS has released updated research that demonstrates the limitations of the AgriStability program. The APAS example shows that there would have to be a catastrophic drop of over 40% in the price of canola (a decrease of \$11/bushel to \$6.35/bushel) before it would trigger AgriStability coverage under the current model.

“APAS has been warning that AgriStability doesn’t work for years,” says Lewis. “Now with COVID-19 producers are experiencing firsthand how the program is failing. It’s the perfect opportunity to make changes that will ensure a more food secure Canada going forward.”

For background information on APAS’s recommendations, visit apas.ca.

###

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Nikko Snyder, Communications Manager
Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan
(306) 789-7774 ext. 6 nsnyder@apas.ca

Background: The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan – or APAS – gives a strong, unified voice to Saskatchewan’s farmers and ranchers. Founded in 2000 by farmers, APAS is a democratic, non-partisan non-profit organization that advocates for the province’s agricultural producers. We tackle agriculture’s most important problems and offer practical, forward-thinking solutions to provincial and national decision makers.