



APAS launches COVID-19 Farm Survey

APAS monitors impact of COVID-19 on Saskatchewan farmers through online survey

March 30, 2020 (Regina, SK) – After coping with a perfect storm of trade disputes, transportation disruptions, and challenging weather conditions for the past two years, Saskatchewan farmers are on high alert about how COVID-19 will impact agricultural finances, supply chains, and access to labour this growing season.

In response to their concerns, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) has launched an online survey to collect information about how COVID-19 is affecting farmers in Saskatchewan. The survey, found at apas.ca/survey, will track how the province’s agricultural sector is coping with the rapidly evolving crisis.

“The situation is changing fast, and it’s crucial for us to have real-time information to share with government about how farmers are being affected by COVID-19,” explains APAS President and farmer Todd Lewis. “The more data APAS can collect about what’s happening at the Saskatchewan farm gate, the more likely it will be for government support measures to actually meet farmers’ needs. The federal government took a first step by increasing the capacity of FCC and extending repayment on Advance Payments Program loans, but increasing farmers’ debt is not the answer. Much more needs to be done.”

The survey, which was launched on March 24, will be updated each week, with results made public and communicated to government officials. Saskatchewan agricultural producers are asked to respond each week in order to track changing conditions. Questions include whether farmers are experiencing disruptions to their operations, including cost increases, shipping delays, and access to the labour force. The survey also asks about farmers’ financial needs and mental health, as well as their top business concerns related to COVID-19.

“The COVID-19 situation is unprecedented, and we really don’t know what to expect in terms of how agricultural supply chains could be affected,” says Lewis. “Saskatchewan produces a significant portion of the world’s food, and we need to understand how farmers are being affected by this crisis. Ideally, a huge number of farmers in Saskatchewan will take the survey every week. That’s how we can make sure the government understands what’s going on here.”

This week’s survey will be open until April 1, with the following week’s survey opening April 2.

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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: 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, APAS strives 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.