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APAS Highlights Major Gap in Trade Support: Saskatchewan's Pulse Farmers Overlooked

REGINA, SK – The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) welcomes the federal government's measures to start addressing trade disruptions and support Canadian agriculture, noting how several initiatives align with APAS's requests. However, the organization is calling attention to a significant gap: the lack of support for the pulse sector, a cornerstone of Saskatchewan's agriculture and sustainable farming practices.

While APAS acknowledges the value of the federal government's response, particularly the decision to double the interest-free portion of the Advance Payments Program (APP) to \$500,000 in 2025-26, questions remain about whether it is comprehensive enough to meet the needs of Saskatchewan farmers.

"To really see what we're up against, just look at the impact of tariffs on pea prices. They've already cost one farmer nearly \$300,000 this harvest. The new changes to the cash advance program are a help—it'll save us a few thousand dollars. But compared to the huge losses from these tariffs, that's just a drop in the bucket," said Bill Prybylski, President of APAS. "We're thankful for this bit of help during such a tough time, but we've got to ask ourselves is this enough to deal with the bigger problems that are hurting Saskatchewan farmers right now?"

APAS commends the government's specific measures aimed at improving financial flexibility for producers, diversifying export markets, and promoting domestic renewable fuel production. These include:

- Advance Payments Program (APP) - Doubling the interest-free portion for canola advances to \$500,000 for the 2025-26 program years, providing much-needed liquidity during uncertain times.
- AgriMarketing Program Expansion - A \$75 million investment over five years to diversify exports into high-growth markets such as Africa, the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East, reducing reliance on volatile markets like China.
- Biofuel Production Incentives - \$370 million over the next two years for biofuel production, indirectly supporting domestic demand for Canadian feedstocks like canola.
- Regional Tariff Response Initiative - designed to quickly address tariff barriers that specifically impact regional agriculture sectors, providing targeted support to ensure these sectors can remain competitive on the global stage.

"These are positive and necessary steps forward, and they reflect progress on the priorities we've raised with the federal government," Prybylski said. "The expanded interest-free Advance Payments limits and AgriMarketing focus on market diversification are critical tools for Saskatchewan farmers dealing with the fallout from global trade disputes—it's good to see the government responding to these pressing needs."



However, Prybylski was quick to point out an important omission in the federal measures: the exclusion of the pulse industry, which is equally affected by trade disruptions. APAS notes that in 2024, Saskatchewan farmers produced 1.5 million metric tonnes of peas. Today's market conditions equate to a \$150 million loss to farmers—yet no specific support for pulses was mentioned.

“That’s a \$150 million hit to farmers and their bottom lines,” Prybylski explained. “Pulses aren’t just another crop—they’re vital to sustainable farming in Saskatchewan. They play a crucial role in crop rotation, bolstering soil health, reducing input needs, and lowering environmental footprints. Ignoring this sector fails to recognize its importance to our economic success and environmental sustainability.”

APAS also raised concerns about the government’s commitment to domestic processing capacity, noting that the biofuel incentives are a step in the right direction but fall short of addressing broader value-added projects like those required for pulses.

“We need meaningful investments in domestic processing for ALL commodities. We’ve been urging support for projects like Federated Co-operatives and Bunge’s Regina projects for canola, but pulses seem to have been left completely out of the conversation,” Prybylski added.

He urged the federal government to take a more comprehensive approach, ensuring a level playing field across all sectors. “The canola measures are welcome, but trade disruptions don’t discriminate—they hurt everyone. The pulse sector is facing the same uncertainties as canola and leaving them out of these plans affects all of us. The success of Saskatchewan farming is interconnected; if one sector struggles, we all feel it.”

While APAS is encouraged by the federal government’s recognition of agriculture as a strategic industry, it warns that piecemeal measures will not suffice in the face of growing global trade challenges. A more inclusive approach is required—one that supports all commodities impacted, accelerates investment in value-added processing facilities, and secures long-term market stability for farmers.

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For more information, please contact:
APAS Communications Communications@apas.ca