

# Minister's Message



The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to providing the right environment for the agriculture industry to grow and succeed in Saskatchewan. By working with producers to improve policies and programs, and through a co-ordinated approach to Canadian agricultural policy, we want to ensure agriculture continues to be a major contributor to the provincial economy.

In July, agriculture ministers from across the country will gather in Quebec City with the goal to sign an agreement on Growing Forward – Canada's new framework for agricultural programming.

Growing Forward is a new, market-based approach to agricultural policy. It builds on the current Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) and is about designing agricultural policy and programs that really work for farmers.

You are probably familiar with the business risk management side of Growing Forward – AgriStability, AgriInvest and Crop Insurance. These programs help provide producers with security when they experience income declines or losses. As promised in the provincial election campaign, Saskatchewan will fully fund these programs in 2008-09.

In addition, Growing Forward will establish AgriRecovery, a federal/provincial program to cover specific disaster events affecting Saskatchewan farmers.

Growing Forward also includes non-business risk management programming. This includes programming pertaining to food safety, the environment, science and innovation. The overall objective of these programs is to build an agriculture sector that is competitive and innovative, responsive to society's priorities and proactive in managing risks.

We are in the midst of a rapidly evolving industry and economic landscape, with unprecedented market volatility, the increased value of the Canadian dollar and new demands for food and fuel. It is important that we help our producers adapt to these new challenges facing the agriculture industry.

Saskatchewan's agreement to Growing Forward is necessary to ensure program and policy predictability for our producers. Signing on to this framework allows us to create programs that will improve our long-term competitiveness, profitability and adaptability.

Agriculture in Saskatchewan is ready for growth. I will continue to work to ensure the Growing Forward framework provides the best possible deal for Saskatchewan producers.

Sincerely,



Bob BJORNERUD

Minister of Agriculture



## WILDLIFE LANDS OPENED TO EMERGENCY GRAZING

Livestock producers dealing with drought conditions in southern Saskatchewan are being offered wildlife land to graze their livestock as a temporary measure.

About 90,000 acres of Fish and Wildlife Development Fund lands will be open to grazing from June 15 to September 15.

"Obviously in a drought situation, the availability of good pasture land for cattle is at a premium," Minister of Agriculture Bob BJORNERUD said. "We are very thankful for this partnership, which will help relieve some of that pressure as producers continue to struggle through this difficult time."

"Conditions have been established to ensure habitat is protected on any lands that are

grazed," Environment Minister Nancy Heppner said. "Although opening wildlife land to grazing will help producers, that access must be balanced with the need to protect the long-term health of the habitat."

The Ministry of Environment purchases wildlife lands through the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, with monies received from sale of hunting and fishing licences. They are managed for maintaining or improving wildlife habitat.

Producers will be responsible to provide any required temporary fencing or water improvements and access under the program to wetlands and riparian areas will be restricted. Eligible lands can be viewed on the Ministry of Environment website at [www.environment.gov.sk.ca](http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca).

Livestock producers interested in grazing particular Crown lands should contact their local Ministry of Environment office. Lands will be allocated on a first come-first served basis.