

## **12 MUNICIPALITIES IN Manitoba Declare STATE OF AGRICULTURAL DISASTER**

### **Insufficient Volume and Frequency of Precipitation Impacts Livestock, Grain And Hay Farmers in the Interlake and Parkland Regions**

(News Release, Ashern, Manitoba, Thursday, August 29, 2019) - The Rural Municipalities of Alonsa, Armstrong, Bifrost-Riverton, Coldwell, Ethelbert, Fisher, Grahamdale, Lakeshore, McCreary, Ste. Rose, West Interlake and Woodlands have declared a State of Agricultural Disaster due to a severe drought situation.

The lack of volume and frequency of precipitation in 2019 has caused considerable damage to the agriculture industry within the Interlake and Parkland regions. Due to the extremely dry conditions, grain, hay and straw producers have faced severely reduced crop yields and pastures have also been adversely affected throughout the growing season. These factors have led to diminished feed resources. The severity of the feed shortage has been compounded by a depleted inventory of carryover feed in 2018 due to dry conditions last summer and the latest long, cold winter.

Affected livestock producers are faced with extraordinary expenses to purchase and transport feed for their livestock. They are further incurring unplanned expenses to drill additional wells to provide water to their animals because dugouts have dried up. Some producers are facing the prospect of having to sell a large portion of their livestock because of the high cost of providing feed. There is increasing desperation among farmers in the Interlake and Parkland regions.

The aforementioned municipalities are calling on the provincial government to initiate discussions with the federal government to do an assessment of the situation under the AgriRecovery Framework. Municipalities are also asking that an AgriRecovery program be considered to provide immediate feed and freight assistance and compensation for drilling additional wells or hauling of water to livestock.

Furthermore, municipalities are asking the Manitoba government to prioritize a meeting with local producers, along with other industry stakeholders to discuss the shortcomings of existing Business Risk Management programs and possible areas for improvement. Farming is a critical component of our local economies and the impact of an agricultural disaster of this magnitude has the potential to negatively affect not only the small towns within our municipalities but the entire provincial economy.

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