MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

HOG PRODUCTION INDUSTRY REVIEW

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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NO EXHIBITS MARKED
Friday, April 27, 2007

Upon commencing at 9:00 a.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, we'll come to order. We have a very busy agenda today and there's no room for extra time, so I'd like to come to order.

This is our final day of hearings, this is our seventeenth day of hearings. Comments before we hear the presentations, I'd ask that you turn off cell phones. If you must take a cell phone call, please leave the room. And also no conversations in the audience, please. And I will enforce the time limits pretty strictly today.

The first person up is Mr. Andrew Nikiforuk.

ANDREW NIKIFORUK, having been sworn, presented as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. NIKIFORUK: Well, good morning Commissioners, it's a pleasure to be here. I'll just briefly state that I am here at the invitation of Springfield Hog Watch. I am a well known Canadian journalist. I have written about intensive livestock operations in Alberta, on the Prairies, since 1998, for the Calgary Herald, for
Canadian Business Magazine, and for a report on Business Magazine. I am also a landowner in Southern Alberta and I have lived downwind from hog operations.

My presentation today focuses largely on work that I have recently completed for a book entitled "Pandemonium," recently published by Penguin. All of the material I'll be presenting today is from chapter 3 of the book on livestock plagues.

Well, let's start briefly by saying a few words about the livestock revolution. The livestock revolution, as we know, is mainly about the massive and fundamental increase in livestock numbers around the globe in response to demand for protein. And pork, of course, is one of the central ingredients of that equation. And we can see that meat production in the world has grown exponentially.

Manitoba is just one of many places in the world that has responded to the livestock revolution and the demands for more protein around the world. And as we can see, the exponential growth in world demand for meat is paralleled by the exponential growth in Manitoba's hog
So what's the story here in terms of increased livestock production around the world? Well, the story is one about unprecedented traffic in people and animals. It's about unprecedented concentration of livestock, and it's about unprecedented disease exchanges in the last 20 -- since 1980, there have been more than 607 imported diseases around the world that have affected livestock operations. The incidence of avian flu and foot-and-mouth disease in the last two decades alone has been greater than that, than seen in the last century.

The hog industry in particular has been affected by a soup of diseases. I am sure many of you have heard about a number of them, Circovirus, which is actually a virus that emerged in 1995 and was discovered and characterized here in Western Canada, and has been responsible for huge problems in the industry and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of pigs. We have swine influenza, we have porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, pseudo-rabies. And these are just diseases particular to the hog industry itself, largely associated with, again, intense
production.

Now, what are some of the consequences of concentration and intense production. Let's look at a little bit of history here. Taiwan, 1997, and the foot-and-mouth disease. Now foot-and-mouth disease is largely a trade disease. This is not a disease that poses any hazards to public health. It's not a disease that actually affects the quality of meat. It is a disease, though, that comes with 1 to 3 per cent mortality in animals and can very much affect the economic productivity of those animals. It is on the increase throughout the world, and in 1997 for the first time in this century, it hit Taiwan.

Now, what did it find in Taiwan in 1997? Well, Taiwan had increased its hog production, much the same way Manitoba has increased its hog production in the last 10 years, with rapid production increases, tenfold growth, largely based on imported corn. So we had up to 14 million pigs or 6,500 per square mile. That's about five times the density you'll find in a place like North Carolina, 60 per cent of the domestic meat consumption, 40 per cent exported to Japan. It was the world's third largest exporter
of pork. Pork accounted for one-third of all agriculture production in Taiwan. Foot-and-mouth disease arrived. The industry also employed nearly a million people.

There was a study in 1991 that suggested that this rapid growth and this incredible concentration of hogs would pose problems and that the industry should be downsized to protect water and health, but that study was rejected.

How did foot-and-mouth disease find its way to Taiwan? Well, we live in a global village, smuggling of live pigs, smuggling of pig meat products, illegal importation of live pigs, smuggling of animal biologics, in other words, even a bad vaccine could carry this virus, legal and illegal movement of people, and/or what the Taiwanese refer to as Trojan pigs, intentional economic sabotage by China. The index farm for this plague was located near a port used for pig smuggling.

This gives you a map of some of the rapid spread of foot-and-mouth disease. It is one of the world's most contagious viruses, very, very rapid spreader, and as soon as you introduce it
into large concentrations of animals, you find explosive growth of the virus.

Again, there is a graph showing just how rapid that spread was. But you see, if you look at the bottom of this chart, you see actually a very small number of animals were actually infected compared to the large numbers that were eventually slaughtered.

And you've got to remember, again, this is a disease that poses no public health hazards, that is simply a trade disease. So what happened?

Well, four million pigs ended up being killed. The military was called out to electrocute animals. The export markets to Japan closed. There were 50,000 people unemployed. The national herd has been reduced to eight million. And Canada was one of the beneficiaries of this particular epidemic in that we helped to fill the gap for Japan in terms of pork exports.

Let's take a look at another mass plague or epidemic. This will be Classical Swine Fever, 1997, Netherlands. What do we know about the Netherlands? Well, they too like Taiwan experienced rapid growth in hog production between
1970 and 1999, and in fact the Netherlands helped pioneer intense livestock production. Again, very small place with 24 million pigs, they were exporting 60 per cent of their product so, again, heavy dependence on exports, and heavy dependence on imported feed, in this case cassava and soybean-cake from Brazil. The Netherlands had the highest intensity of livestock production in the world, according to the Food Agricultural Organization, in other words, 47 pigs per hectare or 10 times the European Union average.

Classical swine fever is again a disease that poses no public health risks, but it is highly contagious. Mortality can vary from almost zero to 100 per cent, and only the domestic pig and wild boar carry this disease. And it can survive for months in refrigerated meat and for years in frozen meat. So it can travel around the globe in a variety of forms, any form of animal trade or pork trade.

So in 1997, it arrived, most likely on a truck from Germany. It also had contaminated a number of centres for artificial insemination and, of course, it exploded in the areas with the densest populations of pigs, in the Netherlands.
The pathways, as I mentioned, transport trucks, swill feeding, artificial insemination, vets and animal killers also rapidly spread this virus in their very attempt to quell this epidemic.

So what happened? Well, we had more pandemonium, 12 million animals destroyed, and the majority were not infected, at a cost of $2.3 billion. The Taiwan fiasco was in the neighbourhood of four to $5 billion. Animal trading movements have to be reassessed says Armin Elbers of the Dutch government. The national plan to reduce herd by 25 per cent following this epidemic, there were also programs introduced to reduce water and air pollution as a result, all coming from hog industry and concentration. So we went from a situation of having at least 9,000 pig farms to as many as 4,000 today.

Then the United Nations warned in 1998, look, Europe may face further devastating animal disease epidemics due to long distance transport of animals and increasingly dense livestock units. So this problem is being recognized at the highest levels around the world, that you cannot concentrate animals in large density without it sooner or later inviting
microbial attention either from viral world or bacterial world.

Sure enough their prediction was bang on. Let's go to England, the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic, 2001. Again, you can see that the global distribution of foot-and-mouth disease in 2001 was much greater than it was in 1997 when Taiwan got hit.

So what started this epidemic? Well, amazingly similar characteristics, rising exports to the continent, one million lambs a year, unprecedented sheep and pig densities throughout rural England, decimated government veterinary services, and as one farmer put it, supermarket greed and the drive for globalization at all costs has turned this country into a cess pit for the world's cheapest meat and meat products.

What were the pathways? How did it get there? Imports of live animals, contaminated meat, frozen, cured, salted, smuggled meat, bad vaccines, travellers, tourists, vets, farmers, birds.

The epidemic began in a small farm, hog farm in Northern England. This farmer was feeding restaurant swill to his pigs. The swill
was probably contaminated with some frozen pork from Asia containing this particular virus. The virus then exploded, in a very, very mild form. And again, we're talking about a disease that does not cause very high mortalities in animals, but can affect their productivity over time and is very much a feared trade disease in the industry. Anyway, it spread extremely rapidly throughout England as a consequence of a number of factors. One, the number of abattoirs in England has been reduced from 8,000 to approximately around 800, so too had the markets for animals. So animals were moving about England in numbers they had never moved before. They were like commuters on crowded trains, but in this case crowded trucks. And there was also the practice of, you could rent your animals out to acquire more subsidies from the European Union, and so all kinds of renting was going on. So enormous movement of animals then spread this virus very, very quickly throughout the country. So in a space of a month, it was almost everywhere, wherever you had large concentrations of animals. Sometimes the virus is introduced to the farm simply on a lorry, on a truck. Other
times it would be delivered by birds, other times by other animal-to-animal contact. It spread rapidly. And then there was a very brief debate about what do we do?

The English Government said, no, we must kill these animals, we must stamp them all out if we want to defeat this virus, whereas a great many farmers and veterinarians said, no, the standard practice in Europe is ring vaccination. Why would you get involved in the mass slaughter of animals when you don't need to do this? The government won the argument and they began a mass slaughter, and they used computer, outdated computer models and mathematicians to decide how to go about to conduct this slaughter, which approached essentially almost a national emergency under Blair's government.

And the slaughter began. There weren't enough people to do the slaughtering, there weren't enough vets, there weren't enough technicians, the slaughtering was cruel and inhumane. Eventually the army was called out. A prominent journalist for Sunday Times said that really the whole issue was really lies, spin, incompetence, cruelty and waste. The largest
barbecue in European history, as another person put it.

On many farms the government would arrive, they would seize even the pets belonging to children. And when they expressed horror at the fact that animals that they owned with no proof of infection were going to be murdered, they were told to grow up, this is the real world, not Disneyland.

The dead: The number of blood tests, 720,000; number of confirmed cases of foot-and-mouth disease found, 337. Three million sheep were culled by the government; 1.6 million were killed for what is known as welfare slaughter because of, due overcrowding conditions, there was nobody there to take care of the animals because of the quarantines in place throughout rural England. Cattle, nearly a million were culled. Pigs, 145,000 were culled. Pigs, by the way, are not carriers of foot-and-mouth disease, but they are amplifiers. You introduce foot-and-mouth disease into an intensive hog operation and the virus will explode and will go airborne and will travel for up to a hundred kilometres.

So, in the end, 10 million animals
were slaughtered, approximately 10 per cent were infected. The military was deployed, up to 15,000. Tourism was suspended throughout rural England. The rural economy is still in shatters from this event. More than 30,000 farmers left farming as a consequence of how the government handled this epidemic. It was a $20 billion disaster, done solely to defend a trade worth less than $500 million a year in terms of animal exports, of Rwanda for sheep for sure.

Two prominent lawyers put together a paper, a brilliant paper called Carnage by Computer, and this is what they said about this. "It involved lawless action by the government on such a scale as to amount to a negation of the basic precepts of law. If a private business stored such a large quantity of flammable materials on its premises...", in other words, they are talking about the animal densities,

"...that its fire control measures could not cope with the great size of a fire caused thereby, would it be
excused from liability for the damage caused?"

We are headed for another disaster. A number of veterinarians around the world now call this disaster simply a crisis of veterinary medicine, and here is the pattern. We have governments and market-places encouraging concentration, we have over-expansion for export, we have increased trade and traffic in animals, we then have a disease outbreak or an invasion, we have a mass slaughter of animals, in many cases that's totally unjustified, and then we have an economic or biological crash. And this is the pattern we saw in Taiwan. It's the pattern we saw in the Netherlands. It's the pattern we saw in England. It's the pattern, if I wanted to include it, that we have seen in Denmark, North Carolina, any place in the world that has concentrated livestock in large numbers.

A word or two about avian influenza. We see similar patterns here with poultry, it is not just pig densities, but poultry densities. In 2003, 30 million birds were killed in Netherlands. In 2004, 19 million birds killed in Fraser Valley, British Columbia, again in a cruel and inhumane
way, total chaos and pandemonium. 1996 to 2006, H5N1, more than 200 million birds have been culled around the globe. The issue of density which has been driving these epidemics is one which is largely ignored by governments in the market-place. Neither governments nor the media want to talk or hear about population densities. And that is coming from one of Canada's top viral experts at the University of Ottawa.

So we have a similar tale to be told everywhere in that density, plus movement of animals, equals more diseases. This is a recent study done in France, in Brittany, and they looked at two regions, in one region where they had less than 100 pigs per square kilometre, and another region they had nearly 10 times that number, and the high density area had twice the rate of respiratory diseases among its animals that the authors attributed to not just the density but the enormous amount of traffic that was needed to go in and service those animals, provide them with feed, veterinary care, and to get them to market. So in other words, thresholds are continually being broken with the scale of these operations.

Is there a problem here? Well, I
think that's the question that you gentlemen are
going to have to ask yourselves and answer.

What would pandemonium look like in
Manitoba? The U.S. borders would close. For
every pig infected, 400 will be killed to relieve
overcrowding for welfare slaughter reasons, there
would be an insufficient Canadian operational
infrastructure. That's from your chief
veterinarian here in the province. The public
response would be to irrevocably withdraw its
support for livestock production.

A few other issues here on livestock
plagues and health matters. MRSA,
Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, this
is one of the globe's major super bugs. It is
responsible for an enormous amount of grief in
hospitals around the world. It's a manmade
pathogen. We made it, we made it by improperly
using antibiotics and prescribing antibiotics. It
emerged in 1961 in European hospitals. It has
since gone global. And the prevalence rates in
Canadian hospitals used to be 5 to 10 per cent.
In many Canadian hospitals, they are now up to 50
per cent. So it is a super bug largely out of
control. It is a bug responsible for these kinds
of infections and has caused enormous amount of
mortality in elderly or immuno-compromised
patients in hospitals, not just in Canada, but in
Europe, United States, around the world.

Now here's new research that suggests
that large concentrations of pigs are a reservoir
for the super bug. Twenty-six pig farmers had
MRSA infections at a rate 760 times greater than
the Dutch population. What they found was three
family members, three co-workers, and eight out of
10 pigs were MRSA positive. And they can easily
track this in the Netherlands because they are one
of the few countries in the world with a 1 per
cent prevalence rate of MRSA in their hospitals.
So they know exactly where MRSA is coming from,
because they decided their hospitals should not be
places where people come to die because they have
acquired infections at the hospital.

Now, here's some more startling data.
Twenty per cent of pig farmers carry MRSA.
Thirty-nine per cent of the pigs in the
Netherlands have MRSA. Five per cent of
veterinarians have MRSA. So a standard practice
in the Netherlands, all hog farmers are isolated
upon admission to hospital in the Netherlands, and
they are tested to see if they have this infection. And if they have it, they are isolated and treated accordingly. And if they are not, then they will spread this infection throughout the hospital and to other patients. This is an infection, by the way, that can be, is extremely, can often be fatal.

On the issue of antibiotic resistance, we know that the figures for the number of drugs being used in intensive livestock feeding operations, the figures range from 40 per cent of the world's global supply of antibiotics that's used for animals, that's the low figure, the highest figure is up to 87 per cent. And the more antibiotics we give animals, the more antibiotic resistance we are creating in those animals, which can then be shared with us, thereby reducing effectiveness of antibiotics altogether.

Now, again, this is Dutch data. Sales of antibiotics for therapeutic use have increased faster than the number of livestock in the Netherlands from 1998 to 2004. An explanation for that is the emergence of new infectious diseases in pigs. Resistance levels in animal bacteria show a simultaneous tendency to increase. So we
know that the hog industry is driving bacterial resistance in a major way.

Other emerging trouble, avian flu. Well, swine can be a mixing vessel for human, swine and avian influenza viruses to create new reassortments that may be dangerous to human health.

The Norovirus, pigs may be reservoirs for emergence of new human Noroviruses. Noroviruses are currently responsible for, they are the number one cause of food poisoning around the world and diarrhea.

THE CHAIRMAN: CDC is the Atlanta?

MR. NIKIFORUK: CDC, yeah, Center for Disease Control.

Now, we have unprecedented numbers of animals, we have unprecedented numbers of diseases running around the globe, but we have fewer and fewer people responsible animal health. In 2002, the Government of Canada had essentially had 670 veterinarians, yet they were responsible for nearly 14 million head of cattle, 14 million pigs, four million of those animals are slaughtered, the cattle, 19 million pigs and a half a million sheep. So we have a problem, and this is an issue
recognized across North America, there is a
shortage of veterinarian doctors. We have more
animals, more diseases, and fewer people keeping a
watch on what's going on.

A few conclusions. In 2004, there was
a major meeting in Iowa where public health people
met and discussed the implications of intensive
livestock operations, and this was their major
conclusion, something that every sector, every
group could agree on.

"Industrialization of livestock
production over the past three decades
has not been accompanied by
commensurate modernization of
regulations to protect the health of
the public or natural public trust
resources such as water."

So Cory Brown, who is a prominent
veterinarian in the United States, has essentially
suggested that our strategy at the moment, we have
intensified livestock production, we are being
hammered left and right with incredible disease
outbreaks, and our approach is simply that of,
which mold we whack next?

Livestock revolutions invite
biological corrections. We have seen that in Taiwan, the Netherlands, Denmark, North Carolina. Monocultures are never secure or sustainable, they just invite disease. They are about vulnerabilities. A livestock plague in Manitoba is probably inevitable given the concentration of hogs in this province at this point in time.

Land use planning for livestock must be part of public health policy. Nature will restructure what politicians fail to restrain.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Nikiforuk. Don't run away yet, we're certainly going to have some questions.

When you were talking about the foot-and-mouth disease in Britain problem, you mentioned this practice of renting out animals. Is that really a farm management problem or is that just one of the many peculiarities of the EU agricultural policies?

MR. NIKIFORUK: That's just one of the many peculiarities of agricultural policies in Europe, and one that the government was largely ignorant of.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was largely ignorant
of?

MR. NIKIFORUK: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Of this practice of renting out?

MR. NIKIFORUK: It came as a huge surprise to the government that farmers were renting out animals. And farmers are an entrepreneurial group, and if the government is going to provide you with more money because you can rent your animals out somewhere, then you can take advantage of that particular policy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Wasn't that fraud?

MR. NIKIFORUK: Of course it was flawed.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, fraud.

MR. NIKIFORUK: Fraud? Fraud on whose behalf? I mean, the subsidies were there. This was not fraud, this was just individuals taking advantage of bad policy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. You also mentioned, you used a map from France of high density areas having twice the amount of disease.

MR. NIKIFORUK: Respiratory disease, right.

THE CHAIRMAN: Respiratory disease.
At what point does density become a problem?

MR. NIKIFORUK: That is an excellent question and that is the question that most virologists in this country would love to answer, provided they were given money to fund you an answer. Earl Brown, at the University of Ottawa, who is one of the top virologists in Canada, has raised this very question in terms of poultry density. He said the issue here is that we will keep on driving these epidemics unless we do some research on at what level can we maintain a flock of ducks or geese or chickens without creating the conditions necessary to heat up a virus very quickly? We have not done that research.

THE CHAIRMAN: His first name is Earl?


THE CHAIRMAN: You also talked about the sales of antibiotics for therapeutic use having increased faster than the number of livestock. Is that true in Manitoba, or is that a worldwide statement, or a specific to Manitoba statement, or Canada?

MR. NIKIFORUK: That's only true to the Netherlands, because I don't believe, I don't
know if you even collect that data here in
Manitoba. The Netherlands collects this data.
It's very vital data and it should be an essential
part of any livestock program. You should know
exactly how many antibiotics you are prescribing,
what kind, and what effect they might have on the
effectiveness of antibiotics used for humans.

THE CHAIRMAN: You also had the number
of government vets and what they are responsible
for. Is that a Federal Government figure or all
governments?

MR. NIKIFORUK: That's a Federal
Government figure, and that's from Vaclav Kouba,
who is the former head of Animal Health for the
United Nations Food Agricultural Organization.
He's written a number of papers on this issue.
The New York Times recently carried a major story
on the shortage of veterinarians and the problems
that it's posing.

THE CHAIRMAN: So what's the bottom
line message you want us to take away from this?
I mean, these are concerns, but how do we address
these? How would the Manitoba Pork Industry
address, or should they address these concerns?

MR. NIKIFORUK: It's not a matter for
the Manitoba Pork Industry to address these concerns, these are concerns that should be addressed by the Manitoban Government. And I would suggest that the Manitoba Government probably did not do its due diligence when it allowed this industry to grow at the rate it has in Manitoba. And if it had taken time to look at the history of the industry in the Netherlands, Denmark, Taiwan and North Carolina, and its impact on water, animal health and public health, it might have set up a series of regulations to address these issues.

Probably the most important thing the Manitoba Government can do now, at this point in time, essentially is faced with the same question Napoleon faced outside of Moscow, do I go on and prepare myself for a catastrophic livestock plague that will devastate rural Manitoba and all the people now dependent on the hog industry, or do I beat a sustainable retreat, and do I actually begin to scale down an industry that has probably been allowed to grow too fast and too large, and with huge costs in terms of its impact on water, animal health, and other aspects of the rural economy in this province.
THE CHAIRMAN: So it's your view that
the industry is already too large in Manitoba?

MR. NIKIFORUK: I would suggest that
with nine million head, it is probably too large.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you hazard a
guess as to what size it should be?

MR. NIKIFORUK: Again, that would be
an issue that I think biologists and ecologists
and local communities would have to think about.

But I would imagine that you are approaching
densities in many parts of Manitoba similar to
those that could be found in the Netherlands or
Denmark or England. And those are dangerously
high thresholds. In other words, you have stacked
the fire, and if a virus is going to come around,
it's going to burn.

THE CHAIRMAN: And you mentioned just
a moment ago the impact on water in a number of
other jurisdictions. What has that impact been?

MR. NIKIFORUK: The impact has been
uniformly the same, a dramatic impact on
groundwater in the Netherlands. So we had
nitrates and phosphorus contamination of
groundwater to the point now that Netherlands
probably has some of the toughest groundwater
protections in the world. In Taiwan you had, again, gross contamination of both surface and groundwater, again with phosphates and nitrogen and copper and other heavy metals. As a consequence of the foot-and-mouth epidemic in 1997, one of the first priorities of the Taiwan Government was to reduce the number of herds in important and critical watersheds throughout the island.

You've had problems with, again, nitrates and phosphate contamination of groundwater in Germany, in Denmark, in North Carolina. The pattern has been the same everywhere, and governments have failed to protect those public resources.

THE CHAIRMAN: All of those jurisdictions, well, Netherlands, Germany, Taiwan, Denmark, they are all considerably smaller than Manitoba. North Carolina is somewhat smaller and also a very different soil and topography. Are there parallels?

MR. NIKIFORUK: Of course there are parallels. Manitoba has repeated the same pattern. As a matter of fact, many people involved in the hog industry in this province have
come from failed experiments in the Netherlands or England or elsewhere. And in terms of concentration, if you look, you can say Manitoba is a big place, but look at where the industry is concentrated. Okay. And that concentration has created these issues of density and animal movement and, as well, as the whole problem of industrial pollution. I mean, you have industrial piles of livestock creating industrial piles of manure. And even the Netherlands, and they are an incredibly creative and innovative people, realized at a certain point that they had 15 million more pounds of nitrogen and phosphate that they were producing in the hog industry than they could correctly dispose of in their own country.

THE CHAIRMAN: How do they dispose of it?

MR. NIKIFORUK: Oh, that I am not an expert on, but they have very sophisticated rules for balancing their manure in terms of making sure that what is getting put back into the soil will not create a phosphate or nitrogen imbalance. And they have worked out all of these equations. And when their soils are maxed out, then they have to
take this manure elsewhere. And I'm not sure exactly where it goes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it possible to avoid the plague that you say is inevitable?

MR. NIKIFORUK: Well, we live in a global world and we have more than a billion people travelling around all the time. We have mass movements of animals and frozen meat at unprecedented scales. We have an explosion in livestock growth around the world. I mean, globalization is a fact of life. And with globalization -- globalization just doesn't mean global trade, it also means trade in all living things -- sooner or later a virus or bacteria will visit Manitoba.

And I would just remind you that in 1951, the foot-and-mouth epidemic that exploded in Saskatchewan, which the Federal Government took about six months to deal with, was introduced by a farm worker from Europe who brought along with him some sausage that contained the virus. So it can be as simple an introduction as that.

THE CHAIRMAN: On a global scale then, how would you suggest this be addressed? I mean, do we just cut back on the amount of protein
that's produced worldwide, or do we just spread
the production out far more to a lot more smaller
operations?

MR. NIKIFORUK: First of all, taking
an agricultural community and transforming it into
an export oriented business on the scale that,
let's say we've done with beef or with hogs,
exposes that entire community to all kinds of
vulnerabilities over time. Having any
agricultural community dependent on the export of
70 per cent of what it produces is a dangerous
thing to do. I mean, the beef industry discovered
that in the last five years with BSE, and the hog
industry will probably experience the same sort of
thing. So we have to rescale our operations, we
have to think more in terms of satisfying local
production and domestic consumption. This
proposal that somehow, you know, one small
community is going to feed the world is a very
modern and probably very dangerous idea, because
nobody really wants to consider the biological
consequences of that. I mean, you cannot increase
trade in animals without increasing trade in
animal diseases, period.

MR. YEE: Yes, thank you.

Mr. Nikiforuk, just a couple of questions for clarification. You gave us the examples of Netherlands and Taiwan. But in your slide of crisis of veterinary medicine, you also mentioned North Carolina. Was that in reference to disease outbreak or mass slaughter, or these kinds of things?

MR. NIKIFORUK: North Carolina has had a number of issues, mostly the gross contamination of water systems, and disease outbreaks as a consequence of that.

MR. YEE: Another question of clarification, I wonder if you could expand, in your conclusion you mentioned land use planning for livestock must be part of a public health policy. Could you just expand a bit on that for me?

MR. NIKIFORUK: This is being suggested by a number of scientists, and what they are essentially saying is, look, you have to look at the full impact of a change to the landscape and what its consequences will be for local human communities and water and wildlife and the ecosystems that are there. The rapid growth of
the hog industry in Manitoba represents a huge change to any number of ecosystems throughout the province. And to my knowledge, nobody took the time or the energy to do a proper environmental assessment of -- to ask what will this mean in terms of, let's say, for example, the incidence of MRSA in our hospitals, if we don't monitor hog farmers and pig farmers? What will this do to the incidence of avian influenza in the province if we don't monitor people involved in this industry? What will this do to our groundwater and the state of our groundwater? What will this do to our local communities and their dependence on foreign markets, which can be extremely fickle? And what will this do in terms of nitrogen and phosphate pollution of our soils and our waterways, our overloading of our soils and our waterways? Those are the kinds of issues that really need to be asked at the beginning, so that if you -- I mean, there's nothing wrong with raising livestock, but the issue always comes down to scale and concentration and who benefits and who pays. And I might add that it's the taxpayers in the Netherlands and Taiwan and Denmark, and North Carolina who are all expected to clean up for the
messes created by the hog industry, because the industry, responding to market forces, decided, well, let's build, let's collect a whole bunch of fire here, or firewood, and let's build a big pile. And then when the fire got out of control, I mean, again, they called upon the public purse to put the fire out.

MR. YEE: Thank you.

MR. NIKIFORUK: Not to mention the enormous and incredible waste of animal lives.

MR. YEE: So I guess in terms of, in summary though, in terms of any livestock and land use planning, one should undertake environmental assessment to look at the potential impacts, both from the human health and ecological side.

MR. NIKIFORUK: From animal health, human health, health of your soils, health of your water, and the health of your rural communities. BSE demonstrated how vulnerable rural communities can be when they depend on one product being exported to one country, and one disease can close those borders and change the trade forever, especially when we don't have an industry -- this industry was not concerned, and I'm speaking here now of the Alberta experience, we weren't adding
value to our beef in Alberta, we were raising
animals cheap for an American market and sending
them across the border. That was a stupid
economic program that benefitted the United
States, added no value to producers in Alberta,
and did not make our agricultural communities any
more sustainable. In fact, they are now all in a
perilous position and the price of beef is still
perilously low. You will repeat that pattern with
hogs if you are not careful.

MR. YEE: Thank you.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you,
Mr. Chairman. I was interested in your, when you
give quotes on statistics as to say there's
14 million pigs in Taiwan, 6,500 per square mile.

MR. NIKIFORUK: Um-hum.

MR. MOTHERAL: Then you say the
Netherlands has 47 per square hectare, which to me
I guess is probably about 20 per square mile.
Like, there's quite a difference in that. I'm
sorry, I wish you would have included in that,
what is the concentration in Manitoba?

MR. NIKIFORUK: That's a good
question. I would assume that's something that
this Commission should know, should have known
that at the start. I don't have access to those figures. I don't know if anyone has an accurate --

MR. MOTHERAL: Well, we know there is eight million hogs, we know the square miles of Manitoba, it's not hard to figure out.

MR. NIKIFORUK: That would give you a false figure because Manitoba is a big province and your hog industry is concentrated in only a few areas.

MR. MOTHERAL: What are they in the Taiwan and Netherlands, is that the whole country?

MR. NIKIFORUK: That is the whole country, yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: That's what I was wanting to find out.

As far as, in my estimation anyway, the several statistics you give on the diseases and the antibiotic reactions and that, I think, I mean, I'm not a veterinary doctor and some of these things I don't understand, but I think I will maybe suggest to the Commission that we do have a meeting with the Veterinary Association of Manitoba, because I'd like to get more of a Manitoba example on these things, I think for use
in our work here.

MR. NIKIFORUK: I would encourage you to do that. I would also encourage you to have a meeting with Terry Whiting, who is your chief veterinarian for the province, and I would also encourage you to have a meeting with Paul Kitching, who is an expert in foreign animal diseases and who can give you firsthand experience of what a horror show the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic was in England.

MR. MOTHERAL: That's all I got.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who is Paul Kitching?

MR. NIKIFORUK: He is the head of foreign animal diseases for the Federal Government and he's based here in Winnipeg.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have raised a very provocative topic this morning. I'm sure we can come up with many more questions, but right now I think we have exhausted our questions. So thank you very much for coming out and making this presentation today.

MR. NIKIFORUK: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Next up is Mr. Al Mackling. Just before Mr. Mackling starts, is
Wanda McPadyeau here? Would you be prepared to go
right after Mr. Mackling, before the break? Thank
you.

AL MACKLING, having been sworn, presented as
follows:

MR. MACKLING: Thank you,

Mr. Chairman, members of the Environment
Commission, for this opportunity to add my words
to probably the many thousands you have heard.

It's somewhat difficult being at this stage in the
proceedings, not knowing what you have already
heard, but to some extent what I'm going to say
then may be just a case of underlining what you
have already noted.

I started an interest in this whole
picture as a resident of the RM of Springfield
when a number of applications for intensive
livestock operations occurred in the RM. And I
became informed and got involved because I was
concerned about the ramifications of these
operations.

Let me say at the outset how impressed
I was with the presentation by Andrew Nikiforuk.
It filled the gap in my knowledge about a number
of issues respecting the threat, environmental
threat of disease from animals.

At one of the applications before the RM of Springfield Council, I brought to their attention concern evidenced by scientists, world scientists as outlined in a National Geographic issue. I'm sorry that I haven't got the date for that issue for you. I looked in my files and was unable to find it. I have had far too many files that I should have re-ordered.

In any event, in that issue the scientists pointed out that there was no question that we would be, the world would be facing another pandemic, a pandemic that would likely be facilitated by the intensive livestock operations in the world, particularly hogs.

And why hogs? They pointed out that hogs, like humans, have the same digestive system, and like humans, they are subject to similar plagues and diseases. It's not unknown that pigs have been used in research because their anatomy is similar to humans. We all know that heart -- organs from pigs have been used in transplants, in substitution for human organs. The pig is a relatively highly intelligent animal and it shares a characteristic of humans in shedding its skin on
a profuse basis.

So the scientists in the world indicated that the likely threat of a pandemic -- they said there was no question there would be a pandemic -- but the likely linkage for the pandemic would be through hogs, because of that relationship of hogs and humans. So that threat has been identified many years ago.

And the presentation by Andrew Nikiforuk, I think should give this Commission real cause for concern about intensive livestock operations involving hogs.

Hogs, like every other animal, including humans, treasure space. We all want some space. They don't get space in intensive livestock operations. They are highly confined. We even use, in Manitoba, housing conditions that have been condemned in Europe. And I'm sure you are familiar with those.

What should we be doing and what has been done in the past? When I was opposing applications for intensive livestock operations in Springfield, the process involved a technical review committee. This technical review committee was composed of government officials. To my
surprise and chagrin, these officials did not appear to be objective, but rather appeared to be proponents of every application. Their technical reviews were skimpy, skimpy to the point where I think they were negligent. For example, they never mentioned airborne particulate, they never mentioned wind direction, velocity, and the likely distribution of the plume from these intensive livestock operations, the plume being the particulate and the gases that are released on a constant basis from these livestock operations, they have to, or the animals would suffocate. They never mentioned them. They never dealt with it.

In some cases they never looked at the specific regulations that were in being in the Health Act, in other acts, including the Clean Environment Commission Act, and indicated whether the proposed operation conformed to those requirements. They were highly deficient.

Now, where do we go from here? I'm sure this Commission has heard many, many arguments about livestock operations. One of the questions that you, Mr. Chairman, put to Mr. Nikiforuk is, what does the hog industry do
now? Well, one thing it should be doing is downsizing. We should be seeing a disperrment of hog production, so that more small and middle-sized farmers are raising hogs, distributing the intensity of the industry, minimizing the threat of colossal wipeouts of herds by disease, and providing a greater diversification of income to farmers.

Regrettably, some years ago the single desk selling of hogs was eliminated and we have a concentration now of hog production in intensive livestock operations, which is a real threat to our society.

I don't want to go on at length about the past. I think what you are challenged with is what do we do in the future?

I think that, as a minimum, this Commission should indicate to the government that livestock husbandry, particularly hogs, should be regulated to at least the extent that they do in other jurisdictions that have had a much longer history in dealing with these problems. And perhaps there would be more humane conditions developed for the housing of animals.

One of the things that I think is
necessary is that, given the fact that we have lagoons, that we have the spreading of manure, with this consequential threat to our rivers and streams and lakes, that we have to develop on an urgent basis a return to the natural filtration of water from farm runoff. Whether it be animal waste or chemical waste, it should be filtered. And it is well known that nature does provide a filtration system if we will allow for it, and that is through small marsh areas, the grasses and the reeds which have the capacity to deal with polluted water and clean it up. It's no secret. But how do you start this? What do you do?

I think one of the first things the government, you should recommend to the government is that they actively engage in determining, through the assessment department, areas of agricultural land that do seem to be continuously in either a wet condition or in a condition where only with great effort can there be any reasonable crop grown.

And aerial photography is available to identify areas of farmland where it is being farmed but it ought to be returned to its natural state. And if we filtered the runoff from farms,
we would make a significant impact on the loading of our rivers and our lakes. We know that Lake Winnipeg is under threat. A very large percentage of that runoff that goes into Lake Winnipeg, the agricultural runoff, comes from the Red River Basin. And the Red River Basin extends well into the United States. I think this Commission should recommend to the Provincial Government that negotiations, discussions be developed with the Red River Basin Authority.

There is an organization, I know that when I was Minister of Natural Resources I attended some of the inaugural meetings of that organization, to reinvigorate a process of developing natural filtration of farm runoff water. I think it's vital. I think it's vital that there be a consideration for invigorating river or stream basin authorities throughout Manitoba, and easterly and westerly from Manitoba. Because this is a national problem, it's not singular to Manitoba.

One of the groups that could be called upon by the Provincial Government is the conservation districts in Manitoba who are in
charge of the responsibility of enhancing and
protecting the rivers and streams in their areas.
There should be a vigorous rejuvenation of those
organizations to ensure that they have the
capacity to develop and recommend areas for water
filtration, and more planting of trees to buffer
the runoff from agricultural production.

Those things I suggest to you are
things that can be recommended to the government.
They are not impossible. They will take time and
effort, but they will help.

In the short run, it is vital that
there be no further extension of industrial
production of hogs in Manitoba.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
Mr. Mackling. Edwin.

MR. YEE: Yes, Mr. Mackling, thank you
very much for your presentation. Just maybe don't
get too extensive in your comments, but if I can
just get your thoughts on, we have heard a lot of
issues around the technical review committees. Do
you have a suggestion on a better process, or how
that can be done in terms of the technical review
committees?

MR. MACKLING: Well, I think the
technical review committees should involve an environmental review process, and there should be a whole list of questions that deal with environmental protection. And if they can be satisfied, that would be of great help.

MR. YEE: Thank you very much. That's all the questions I have, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Wayne.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mackling, I know one of your suggestions was to encourage more smaller operators and small production, and I know that we would all like to see this ideal euphoric society, whatever they call it, that you see pictures in magazines of a couple of hogs running around, and a horse and a cow and things like that. It's just not going to happen. It just cannot be economically feasible, because you can't make a living doing that. Most of the times we see that, and I'm going from farming experience, is mostly from hobby farmers who don't have to make a living at that.

And I say that, I'm not trying to downgrade this decision, I would love to see those kind of things come back again, and I don't really
know when I say it can't happen, I don't know how it's going to happen. I should rephrase that, I don't know how it's going to happen.

Some of your changes, you'd like to see too, you say, natural filtration, and there are some things being involved in that today.

MR. MACKLING: Not enough.

MR. MOTHERAL: I am just saying, the technology, we are working on that. Nutrient reduction, et cetera, more wetlands, one of the problems, I think we've heard this from other areas in the province, is there are programs out that land stewards can apply to, to get some funding for these kind of situations where you can get more wetlands. But the problem is, there's not enough. And I'm wondering, how high do you think society or the consumer can pay for these? Where is the point where it would make it feasible to do these things? Because five to $10 an acre, you can't make a living on that either. Any suggestions on that way?

MR. MACKLING: Well, Mr. Motheral, to begin with, the cheap, early way, we have learned is the expensive way in the long run. We have learned that with the dumping of hazardous waste
in places in the world. The cheap, inexpensive way that industry often follows is the very, very expensive way in the long run. And the same sort of attitude prevails in respect to agriculture.

    Now, you say that, you said, for example, well, you know, it's kind of a dream world to think of having animals raised in a more humane condition. You didn't use that word, but I'm using it. There are systems available. They have straw based litter for hogs, they have hoop style enclosures where hogs can run relatively freely. And they are not that expensive. But what we have is an industry now dominated by big feed companies who build these plants, and it's cheaper to operate that way, that's their scale and that's the way it's going to be. It seems to me that we as a society have to take an interest in determining these things, not leaving it to big industry to decide what they want and how they are going to do it.

    MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you. That's all I have.

    THE CHAIRMAN: The subject of wetlands in particular for natural filtration has certainly come up before. I think it has a lot of positives
to it, but is it possible to put that in place on a scale that would service all of Manitoba agricultural land, or at least all of Manitoba livestock agricultural land?

MR. MACKLING: I believe it is possible, and I'll give you an example. In the RM of Springfield, I had a neighbour not too close by, who was a hobby farmer, but part of his land was continually wet. And he conceived of the idea of having a filtration area. He tried to develop it, he couldn't get funding for it, couldn't get funding for it. Ducks Unlimited or anyone else, any foundation wasn't interested. It would have been a natural filter, it would have been an asset for wildlife. He was prepared to give up the land. No takers, no interest. It seems to me that there has to be leadership. Government has to take leadership in finding ways to get farmers happy about redeveloping a filtration system, whether they have to buy those few acres per quarter section or what, that's something that the government has to be charged with responsibility and deal with it. It has to show leadership.

I'm not suggesting that overnight we're going to change this system. But the
government has to show leadership in making a
significant beginning.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much
Mr. Mackling.

Wanda McFadyean.

WANDA MCFADYLEAN and ALAN RANSOM, having been
sworn, presented as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MR. RANSOM: Good morning, gentlemen,
my name is Alan Ransom, I'm a cattle producer
farmer from the Boissevain area, I'm also the
chairman of the Manitoba Farm Stewardship
Association. With me is Wanda McFadyean. Wanda
is the Executive Director of the Farm Stewardship
Association. Also in our audience is a fellow
director from the board, Jimmy Hilliard is one of
our directors.

The Farm Stewardship Association's
responsibility is to deliver environmental farm
plans in Manitoba, along with MAFRI, that's
Manitoba Agriculture Department, and also with
Agriculture Agrifood Canada. I do thank you very
much for this opportunity to make a presentation
here this morning.

And I would like to demonstrate to you
one example of Manitoba agriculture farmers' commitment to a healthy people and a healthy landscape. I remind you that this is an overall example of the agriculture industry, and Manitoba Pork producers make up a significant portion of our agriculture people. We'll start with our overheads.

The environmental farm plan is voluntary. Producers choose whether they want to go through this process or not. It is confidential, and it also is a self-assessment, who is most capable of making a critical assessment of their individual farm? The plan also assists the producers in identifying their environmental assets and risks, and helps them to develop an action plan to address the risks on their operation. And this is the part where MAFRI and PFRA assist in helping, giving the technical support in helping us do that.

The main objective of agriculture, the policy framework is to advance Canada's role as world leader in our environment responsibility, responsive agriculture production. To realize this goal, a national initiative for agriculture environmental farm planning is currently under way.
across Canada. We are just one of the provinces that are doing this.

Just a brief history, in the fall of 2002, the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, or MRAC as we know it, became involved in the environmental farm planning process through consultation with PFRA, with MAFRI, and with Keystone Agricultural Producers, as well as a number of commodity groups, Manitoba Pork Council being one of them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sir, can you just describe for me what the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council is?

MS. MCFADYEAN: The Manitoba -- perhaps we should ask Jenny to answer this, she is also involved with them. Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council is a council here in Manitoba which looks at various research projects and initiatives in relation to agriculture across Manitoba. They similarly have other sister organizations across the country as well. So they spearheaded this initiative in consultation with the key stakeholders mentioned.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it a government agency, or is it an agency of farmers or rural
people or --  

MS. MCFADYEAN: It's an agency of farmers and urbanites from across Manitoba who look at various research projects. They are a not for profit organization.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Wayne.

MR. MOTHERAL: I think maybe I can add a little light to this too. It was formed as a result of the demise of the Crow.

MS. MCFADYEAN: Right.

MR. MOTHERAL: I mean that was what the whole thing -- so they are alternate.

MS. MCFADYEAN: Alternate, yeah.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks.

MR. RANSOM: What you see in front of you is a list of our directors. There are predominant producers on the board of directors of the Farm Stewardship Association. All of the producers on that board have been or are involved in livestock production. There is also representation from conservation interests, representation from consumer groups. We also invite Federal/Provincial Government representation, and also conservation interests.

By the way, it is a requirement of all of the
producers on that board to have completed an environmental farm plan.

As we see, the primary role of FSAM is in cooperation with our partners, and I stress this, a very strong partnership with PFRA, or Agriculture Agrifood Canada and with MAFRI, as well as stakeholder agencies such as the conservation districts, Manitoba Habitat Heritage corporation, commodity groups. It is to deliver the environmental farm plans to Manitoba producers who wish to voluntarily be involved in this process.

The delivery process is relatively simple. A producer voluntarily registers for a workshop and he gets his legal land description. What they do is then attend the first workshop where they receive the workbook and start being involved with starting the farm plan. They then complete the work plan at their leisure at home, come back to a second workshop where the plan is finished. Once they have done that, once they have completed it, if they wish, they may go on farther to have their plan reviewed. And once they finish their plan, they can seek further funding through the Canada Manitoba Farm
Stewardship Program.

There is, when a producer voluntarily registers for a workshop, there is no associated cost for producers. All the supplies, that sort of thing, and assistance are there at no cost.

However, there is a time and a travel commitment for the producer to come, and some of these people have driven several hundred kilometres to make sure that they are at a workshop.

The producer must attend a workshop in order to receive an environmental farm plan workbook. However, we will make an exception for you folks this morning.

The workbook itself is comprised of three sections. The first section, we look at what the natural risks are on our farm. That's what mother nature gave us. We then look at the management, how we apply management, and there are assets and risks. And then the third part is how do we address it? That's our environmental farm plan.

A little more detail in section A, the analysis of natural risks on the land that the producer manages using a variety of tools. This includes also analyzing the farm yard site, our
homes, the place where we have farm, store farm
products, and then also look at our fields.

Section B has 19 subsections divided
into farm and field site categories. Producers
only complete the subsection and questions that
pertain to their operation. You must realize that
this book was designed to fit all Manitoba
farmers, that the farmer needs to only look at the
sections that involve his farm.

Section B also addresses a variety of
environmental concerns and asks producers how they
manage these concerns on their operation. And the
producer then rates whether it's a liability or a
risk on his operation.

There is a list of the sections, the
sections in that section B, they run all the way
from water source protection and management, all
the way through to the last section, which is
energy efficiency. So it's very, very
comprehensive. We deal with everything, not only
from the waste, through how we deal with manure,
but also how we deal with our household items that
we have. So it's the whole gamut.

Section C is what we call my
environmental farm plan. And this deals where we
develop an appropriate action plan that deals for
the higher risk items, and we also put our
priorities, the time lines and the financial
resources.

Once we have completed the
environmental farm plan, we may wish to move
forward with a confidential review of their plan.
And again, this review is voluntary, it's
confidential, and it's one-on-one. And it's done
with the regional coordinator. We have four
coordinators in the province, and it's done in a
neutral location. It's not done at the farmer's
kitchen table.

The intent of the review is to provide
a support of credible process that will assure the
producer that the action plan developed by them,
when implemented, will be a benefit to him or her
and their family, and further contribute to a
cleaner and healthier environment and enhance
agriculture sustainability. It is important to
note that the environmental farm plan work resides
with the producer at all times. It is their
document, their item, they take ownership of it.
Upon the completion, a successful
review statement, a completion, and the Canada
Manitoba Farm Stewardship Program application form is then forwarded to the producers.

A brief note on the Canada Manitoba Farm Stewardship Program, the objective here is to accelerate the adoption of beneficial management practices, what we refer to as BMPs. Its cost incentives are available to producers to implement the BMPs to address their on-farm environmental risks. Criteria and principles for the 30 BMPs have been developed at a national level as a guide. And in Manitoba, we have customized it for the province, but all 30 are available for the producers.

Under that program, the maximum available to any one farm unit is $50,000, and that goes the program goes to March 2008. It is a cost-shared program. For some of the BMPs, depending on what the producer benefit versus public benefit is, it will be a 30 per cent government contribution. And where the public benefit is higher, it will be at 50 per cent.

The numbers as of March 31, 2007, the total number of application projects under this program that have been approved are 3,665, which means that there will be a total commitment of
dollars to this program, federal dollars to this program of 17.8 million.

I do want you, though, to look at the next item which is extremely important. It's a producer commitment through this program, during the same time frame, is 42 and a half million dollars.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those are Manitoba figures?

MR. RANSOM: This is just Manitoba, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Since when, Mr. Ransom?

MR. RANSOM: This is the program started two years ago, this is a two year time frame all of this has occurred.

MS. MCFADYEAN: Actually, less than two years, it's been approximately since July of 2005 that producers were eligible to access the funding.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. RANSOM: That is in excess of $60 million of commitment.

Where we are today, this is going back to our environmental farm planning, we have held 702 workshops. This, again, I remind you is in
conjunction with MAFRI and with PFRA. Producer participation at those workshops has been over 5,300, all voluntary. On a percentage basis, we have about 92 per cent of the producers come back to do the workshop two that have attended the first workshop.

The overhead, the picture that you see in front of you is a picture of the province identifying, its municipal map, municipalities across the province, it is to give you some idea this has been representative right across the province, it's not one particular area of agriculture in Manitoba, it's right across the province that this has occurred.

The review process, and this is where we actually review the environmental farm plans, the statement of completions, and they need to have a review before they can get a statement of completion, is over 4,100 producers in this province. We do track this. This is about 78 per cent of the producers that have gone through the program. We do track the total number, the number of acres that are covered under each of the plans, and there's no duplication in this number, that 6.7 million acres of agriculture land in this
province is covered under an environmental farm plan.

The farm types range, we track whether it's a mixed operation, grain and livestock, grains and oil seeds, livestock, and then other. And other can be horticulture, agri forestry, aquaculture. You will note that the livestock and mixed are about 60 per cent of the total number of producers have gone through it. So a significant numbers of livestock, of these people that have been reviewed are livestock producers. We do not identify specifically whether they are hog producers, cattle producers, or sheep producers. But I can say from doing reviews and being involved, a significant number of them are hog producers.

Again, there's another indication of this map, municipal map of Manitoba, and the agriculture region which shows the coverage of the number of people that are involved.

We have done, this is a very recent random exit survey of producers, and this is the producers that have come to the first workshop. We sent out 750 surveys. At this point, we have about 40 per cent of them returned to us. The
only thing we did with the survey was make sure
that none of the Board of Directors, or
duplication, that means more than one to a
household, were sent out. But it is a random
survey. This is their comments. Ninety-one per
cent of the respondents recommend the
environmental farm process to other producers. In
other words, they found it a very, very useful
exercise.

And the other one is that 80 per cent
of the respondents had or were in the process of
implementing on farm environmental improvements
outside of any incentive program. Remember, the
thought workbook, it's an awareness document.
Once they became aware of issues that pertain to
their operation, they were ready to address them.

Comments, and these were comments that
were very common, "I found that we are already
doing a good job with regards to the environment
and where we could make further improvements. And
just looking at the farm from this point of view
raised my awareness about a number of issues."

I just want to end my comments by
saying that all of this activity has occurred
within two years, $60 million of improvements is
just part of our commitment to the natural
resource base and people's health. The challenge
to making improvements and working with the
environment is in constant change. Our knowledge
and technology improves, so does our working with
the people and the environment.

The environmental process has shown
that farmers, including hog producers, are capable
of making this -- meeting this challenge.

Again, thank you very much, and Wanda
and I will be quite prepared to answer any of your
questions. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Would it be
possible to make this program mandatory, at least
on a sectoral basis?

MR. RANSOM: In some cases it is. The
Manitoba Vegetable Producers -- I believe their
name has now changed to Manitoba Potato Producers,
that commodity does make it mandatory, in fact,
they have to have it before they can get a
contract. So in that case they do it mandatory
That would probably occur commodity by commodity,
but that's a decision that the commodity groups
have to make.

MR. YEE: Yes, Mr. Ransom, just again, for clarification, you mentioned your workbook section A deals with natural risk. This is a double question, I'm going to ask both because it's related. The very next one had a variety of tools can be used to address the natural risks. Can you just give me an idea of the natural risks you are referring to?

MR. RANSOM: What they do in section A, and this pertains straight to that individual farmer. Remember that they have identified the location, so that you know what your risks are and soil type, whether it's a light soil, heavy soil, that means whether it's sandy, clay, then you start to identify what your erosion risk is, for example, or your leaching ability. So are you on a piece of land that is more at risk to leaching? That may not be a good spot to put your livestock. Again, if you're on a heavy clay soil, you will also have the concern of runoff. But that's what mother nature gave you. You can also get the wind risk erosion maps of the municipality that you're in, also for water erosion. There are a number of tools and a significant amount of information that can be contained there. And remember it's all
supported by Manitoba Agriculture and also PFRA.

MS. MCFADYEN: Detailed soil maps are available to the producer, soil specialists are in the room. So there is a lot of comprehensive information provided to the producer at the first workshop, as well as the second. And we certainly welcome them to contact ourselves, Manitoba Agriculture, or PFRA, for further assistance as they work through the process. So they are made aware of all of those things.

I should also note that within the workbook in section B, when we take a look at that, if there is legislation currently in place in this province in relation to a respective question such as setbacks for the appropriate spreading of manure, et cetera, those are all highlighted and brought to the attention of the producer.

MR. YEE: One last question, it certainly seems to be over the short period of time since, you mentioned July of 2005, there's been 3,665 projects. I'm just wondering, what sort of projects would they be? What categories of projects are there, and is there a particularly significant category that's been funded?
There's been a number of categories that producers have looked at. I would suggest in the top five there have been two categories that are representative of the livestock industry.

It's important to note that Manitoba Water Stewardship has also provided a top-up of $5,000 on initiatives such as improved manure storage. Those have been in the top ones here in the province, as well as general farm products, that's been another one that producers have looked at, how they are storing their hazardous products such as fertilizers, pesticides, fuel storage. And then the crop producers are also looking at it as well to make improvements to their equipment with respect to how they are applying fertilizers, sprays and those types of activities.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Wayne.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've got several questions and comments. And first of all, I'd like to say how we are pleased -- that I am personally pleased with the volunteer situation. I like to see things like that done voluntarily.
It's been suggested by many associations during our travels that possibly intensive ILOs should go through the environmental licensing process. Do you feel as though, because of increasing public pressure, do you think that this may become something that in the future you may have to have a licence to farm? That's a big question, but it's got a lot to do with what we are studying here.

MR. RANSOM: I was going to say Mr. Motheral, but you and I know each other too well, I'm going to have to use Wayne.

I think because of the awareness of our neighbours and that sort of thing, we are already part of that, we are already meeting some of that demand. I think one of the things in our workbook is, some of the things we do, pay attention to the impact that may have on our neighbours. For example, if I was to go out and apply manure, make sure that it will not have an impact on the people that live beside me, and that can be an urban or another farmer. It's whoever my neighbour is. The other thing is when we look at the nutrient management and it pertains to water runoff in our water systems, I mean, we
don't necessarily, I won't necessarily think of Lake Winnipeg, I'm going to think of my neighbour that is living beside me. I don't want to have a negative impact on his water. So I think, to some degree, we are improving how we deal with our neighbours, how we live with our neighbours. And I think that's the overall objective.

By having a licence, does it make it any better? I don't know. But I would think that our objective in thinking about who we live with and who we live beside is probably more important. And working with the environment is our objective.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you. That is all.

MS. MCFADYEAN: If I might add, the Environmental Farm Plan Workbook, the underlying guise of the workbook will accept at four key areas. We look at how producers are managing their soil, air, water, and biodiversity. And so those are the things that producers are looking at when they go through the process, how they are managing that, the impact to neighbours, the impact to their families, the impact to the environment, to the soil, to the air, to the water, to the biodiversity issues, they are
looking at all of those when they go through the
process. And that has met national approval in
the process.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
Ms. McFadyean and Mr. Ransom, for coming out this
morning. Thank you.

We will take a ten minute break.

(PROCEEDINGS RECESS AT 10:41 A.M.
AND RECONVENED AT 11:00 A.M.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Could we come back to
order, please? Could you resume your seats? We
are running a little behind and I don't want us to
be too late here today.

First up is the Keystone Organic
Nutrient Applicators. Is that Mr. Redekop?

DOUG REDEKOP, having been sworn, presented as
follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. REDEKOP: Good morning committee
members. My name is Doug Redekop, and I would
like to thank you for the opportunity to present
here today. I'm here on behalf of the Keystone
Organic Nutrient Applicators Association, or
KONAA, for which I'm the acting president. I'm
also the general manager of a livestock manure
application company that has been operating since 1993.

There have been a lot of changes to the industry in the last 14 years. If I look back, there were only a handful of applicators when we started back at that time. Our industry has grown alongside that of the hog industry. Manure has gone from being described as a waste to that of a valuable nutrient.

When the Clean Environment Hearings were announced, we felt it would be an excellent opportunity to educate the public as to the job we do and the manner we do it in.

KONAA, although only formed a few months ago, represents a group of 18 individual companies that cover our province from east to west. It is estimated that our group applies approximately 50 to 60 per cent of the manure applied in the province.

Our members discussed how we best illustrate our management of the manure that we apply, and it was felt that a survey would be the best option. The response rate to that survey was over 90 per cent by our membership, and in the following presentation I will highlight key areas
of the survey and how we compared to a recent Stats Canada survey that was conducted across three Prairie Provinces representing approximately 376 farms.

It was found that 94 per cent of our membership provided custom services to the livestock industry, 83 per cent of the manure handled by our membership is hog manure, and that our membership covers approximately 125,000 to 360,000 acres annually.

There are a variety of applicator types represented within our group. It was found that 76 per cent of the membership utilized the common drag hose system for application. The balance would be with tanker and/or other. And that three kilometres, or just over two miles, was an average hauling distance for manure in the year 2006.

I can speak from experience here that when we started we were probably more in -- that half to one mile was more of a common distance at that time, and it has grown steadily over the past three to five years and we anticipate that it will continue to grow.

Here I have got some slides of some
examples of applicators types. What we see here is a tanker being pulled by a farmer's tractor with a shallow type injector airway into a minimum till application. Here is another slightly different angle of the same thing. This tanker has a Colter disk opener with a harrow section behind for closure. This unit also has a disk type opener behind and is pulled by an Agchem applicator tractor there.

This slide indicates, you will see the skirting around the bottom, underside of the applicator there, and that was installed by this applicator in the efforts to reduce odour and nitrogen losses. And it looks to me like he is applying in to alfalfa on this photo.

For those of you that aren't familiar with the drag hose type application system, that is what this represents here. You will see the swing arm off the centre of the applicator and just a section of the hose in behind it. This is a chisel type applicator going into annual crop scenario.

This is another photo of the drag type hose, but this is a disk opener, and it looks like he is on a demonstration parcel here in grassland.
You will notice the spacings on those Colters, it looks to be approximately 16 inches.

This slide here shows another drag hose application scenario here. It is an airway, but what is unique here is that he is applying it to standing wheat crop. And the leaf stage there is between three and five leaf stage. I know this one firsthand because I followed it right from the point of application through to harvest, and their crops advisor was there taking plant counts, and they were very impressed with the job that was done. And like I say, I followed it straight through to harvest, and the applicator, who happened also to be the landowner, was very pleased with the results and saw actually marginal improvement on yield over commercial fertilizer application.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Redekop, before you leave that slide, so that hose is bringing in the slurry from the end of a pipeline?

MR. REDEKOP: Yes, it is. I imagine the farm could be anywhere from across the road to two, three, four miles away. That is what we call a lay-flat hose. So there is a pump at the berm of the lagoon pumping the effluent to the
applicator in the field, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: So how long is that hose?

MR. REDEKOP: It comes in 660-foot lengths. Our particular company has the ability to, and has pumped up to three and three-quarter, four miles with one unit.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was this one hose, with an aboveground hose like that?

MR. REDEKOP: It is sections of hose coupled, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: But you can have a joined hose three kilometres long?

MR. REDEKOP: Yes, we do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. REDEKOP: The key thing to notice, and you can't really see it on these slides, but the drops are seven and a half inches on centre here. And if you compare that even to an air seeder, I believe their drops are at 12 inches. So you look at the fact that we are going with tighter spaces here, that makes for an even more uniform application of product across the applicators. So we are always trying to keep in mind what works well for the crop, because at the
end of the day they are the end user of the
manure, and it is often a complete replacement for
commercial fertilizer.

Application rates are based on
agronomic decisions most often made by the land
manager or nutrient management coordinator. I
have to highlight that these rates are based on
government guidelines, and that applicator
equipment choice is often based on individual
preference, along with due consideration given to
conditions, crop type, moisture conditions and so
on.

One hundred per cent of our members
reported that rates of manure applied varied for
almost every job that they did. And I guess how I
want to explain that is that there is no one
application rate that we go on. I mean, if you
grow wheat you often hear, well, I want to put on,
I want to end up with 80 to 100 pounds of N, or
Canola, maybe upwards to 145 pounds. What I want
to stress here, I guess, number one, I'm not a
nutrient management specialist, but I guess I have
got common sense on my side, and we know that we
have a number of factors that we need to look at
in order to make a sound economic, or a
responsible decision here when we figure out the rates. And that is what residual is left in the soil, what type of crop is being planted, and what nutrients is the manure bringing to the field? And so all of those factors play into it when we are told, or calculate the rates that need to be applied to the field. 88 per cent of the time, rates applied were based on nutrient requirements. So there is some room for improvement there, but that is a high number. It was also reported that 94 per cent of the time, equipment was calibrated to deliver the expected rate of application.

Our membership has been very proactive in adopting new technology as it has come along. Our particular company that I represent was one of the first ones to adapt GPS. But the use of GPS and flow meters has become very common place, and I believe the majority of our members are already using both of those technologies.

Here we have got a photo of a typical flow meter installation, and what the dial is showing there is the flow, it is metering the flow of manure from the lagoon to the field. This flow meter is installed in the applicator tractor like we saw in the previous photo there. So when my
tractor operators, or our operators are running in
the tractor, and we are running often 24 hours a
day, we are constantly watching this flow meter to
look at the flows coming out to the field. And if
there is any drop, dramatic drop in flows, the
guys are in constant communication via radio back
to the lagoon to let the fellas know, hey, I'm
seeing a drop, what is going on? And if it is
dramatic, then we know perhaps there is a link in
the pipeline coming out to the field and we have
the ability to shut down the pump from the tractor
in the field even distances up to three miles or
greater. And so we can kill the pump at that
point and then go and look to see what is causing
it.

If we look at the calendar year -- or
sorry, if we look at the types of situations that
the manure is applied in to, I would say that
these numbers indicate that we are pretty much
evenly applicating as a percentage on tilled land,
minimum till situations, and perennials or
forages. If you look to the right, the Stats
Canada survey indicated that when you look at the
three Prairie Provinces, most farmers reported
that at least half of their manure was being
applied on to tilled land, with the balances going on minimum till and/or forages. I think the key thing with this slide is it indicates that we are trying, as a membership, and the farmers we are applying for, to apply the manure not only in the best fashion that we know how to, but when the crop is ideally able to use that nutrient, as in the earlier slide where I showed the farmer applying to standing wheat. So we have the full flexibility to apply when the crop can best use it.

It was found also that membership restricts the application primarily to the growing season, and I should say maybe even our applicating season. Our government tells us that our season starts up on April 10th and goes until November 10th. Of course we need to keep snow, ice, moisture, all of those factors into consideration, and there hasn't been too often there has been extensions before and beyond those dates.

Also, it was interesting to note that the spreading policies really did not change whether the farms that we were applying for were either below or above 300 animal units. And I
I think that is key, because right now it is the 300 animal unit threshold that dictates whether or not the farms need to file nutrient management plans. The prairie survey, however, indicated that most farmers spread throughout the entire 12 month calendar, but the majority still falling within that April through to November time frame. It certainly has, if you drive the countryside like I do, you certainly do see a noticeable decrease in the application of nutrients on to snow and frozen fields. And I think, you know, we have to give our farms credit too. We are not dealing with individuals that are ignorant to situations, number one; but also economics really certainly plays a part in it. If you look at last fall's nitrogen costs down around 29 cents a pounds, and we are currently looking at 54 cents a pound, why would you want to waste a valuable nutrient like that?

This slide indicates the spread of liquid manure and the type of application. If I go down the left column first, broadcasting made up about 18 per cent of our membership's application. And for those of you that don't know what that means, that means spread on to the
surface without any incorporation. Dropped on surface was 5 per cent, and the only real deviation from the earlier type is that that indicates that it is dropped close to the surface, and therefore it is thought that it reduces the odour emissions and perhaps some volatilization of nitrogen also.

Shallow injection was 39 per cent, pretty much equal with the deep injection, and I showed you slides earlier, shallow injection would have been the airway with the times seven and a half inches on centre. Deep injection would be considered the shovel type applicator.

It is also interesting to know that none of our members irrigate manure, which is with an irrigation type gun, which is extremely positive.

If you look down the right-hand side, there is quite a high number of prairie farmers applying manure by broadcasting methods. If you look at, I guess, the also real differences would be the shallow type injection, they are just starting to catch on to that. Deep injection is pretty close, but there is -- there are still some individuals that are irrigating also.
Does the method of application change from season to season? 76 per cent of our members responded no. When they did deviate from a standard application method, it was meant to be at the time when they broadcast on to grass. And I have to make an assumption here that there are some, I know for a fact there are some acres that receive manure that would be barriers such as stones that would not allow for the incorporation of the manure.

How frequently is chemical analysis done on liquid manure? Our membership reported that 80 per cent of the time that is done, and that 94 per cent of the time our members assisted the customer in obtaining the analysis necessary.

It is important to note that Nova meters, and that is a test equipment type that we use in the field for instant analysis of the manure, that along with the lab analysis results that the farmer receives back when we submit raw manure samples to the lab for testing, and historical data banks all play an important role in determining application rates. It is not one or the other, it is all really together.

80 per cent of our members reported
that they make efforts to minimize odour emissions which often result in nutrient conservation. I showed a slide earlier with the skirting around the applicator. That would be an example of one of those. I think obviously incorporation of the manure wherever possible is also a key highlight for that. And even as far as weather conditions I think also plays a part in that.

Some of the future directions that we are looking for with our KONAA organization, and that we feel the Commission and public should be aware of, is that we continue to add more delivery hose to our inventory so that we can reach new spread acres further away. And that is a sizeable investment. If I look at adding 8-inch hose to my company, I'm looking at at least $100,000, probably around $110,000, and that is just the hose. Then I have to look at adding another, a reel to store that hose, so I'm looking at a financial commitment of $130,000 to add one mile of 8-inch hose. If I look at the past two years, we added half a mile last year and we added a mile this year. So if I look at the two units we run only, we have almost the ability to reach five miles away from sites.
On the go nitrogen testing was also identified as a key issue for us, with variable rate application. And we are speculating, I mean, it could be two years from now, three years now, maybe, I think we want to be objective and say it could be upwards to five years away, but it is coming.

On-site phosphorous testing, currently right now we only have the ability to test for nitrogen. But we, I mean, we look at the previous year's lab analysis for the manure so we can get an indicator there, and also the historical data for those farms. So we are not crippled by not having that information on site right at present, but it certainly would be helpful.

The other key thing I want to highlight here is that we want to play a role, consultation role in the applicator licensing. Our government promised, I believe over two years now, that all applicators would be licensed at this point. And we still aren't, and I just want to highlight the fact that it is not because we don't want to be responsible and be licensed, and we feel there is a part that we can play in completing that process and adapting it at our
Adding dry manure applicators to our list of members I feel is key to rounding out our organization. Currently right now our members are all liquid manure applicators, and a high percentage of it is hog only. So if we could round out our membership to include more individuals it would be, I think, advantageous to us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Redekop.

MR. REDEKOP: I just wanted to draw one conclusion if I could?

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

MR. REDEKOP: I want to highlight that our members are responsible individuals that are aware of the challenges they are faced with. They have and will continue to embrace change and adopt new technology pro-actively. We are aware that regulations will continue to evolve. If there is a confidence in these regulations that the government has put in place, I urge them to take the time to prove that the changes are indeed effective before moving on. I know that in research it is impossible to come to accurate
conclusions if variables are changed at will. And I want to say once again that KONAA's membership is committed to the establishment and maintenance of a sustainable environment and industry. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You indicated more or less at the outset that your membership comprises about 50 to 60 per cent of the industry. Are you working to get the others into your organization?

MR. REDEKOP: As I mentioned at the end of my presentation, yes, we would love to bring more members into our organization. We can't forget, though, that a large percentage of our pigs produced in Manitoba are by Hutterite colonies, so I think it would be slow to bring individual colonies into our membership, but I still think there is room to grow our organization, yes.


MR. YEE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one question, Mr. Redekop. In terms of the data that you gave us in to the type of spread liquid manure methodology, broadcast and shallow and deep injection, are those stats recent
stats? They are for Manitoba, right?

MR. REDEKOP: The statistics that I highlighted are from our survey that was done in late February, early March. I'm not sure how recent the Stats Canada survey was completed. That I would not be able to answer.

MR. YEE: Thank you. That is it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Wayne.

MR. MOTHERAL: Just one question, in light of the new phosphorous regulations where many operators need more spread acres, what do you think the maximum distance that manure can be pumped? Like you were talking about possibly five miles, but would that be maximum?

MR. REDEKOP: That would be maximum today. I think it really comes down to will and economics really.

MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. That is all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Redekop.

Next is Animal Watch Manitoba, Keith Thornton and Sid Baumel.

KEITH THORNTON, having been sworn, presented as follows:

MR. THORNTON: Yes, good morning
Mr. Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen. I'm going to present a very practical demonstration of an alternative system for pig production based on experience in the Midwest and also in Europe.

I'm a native of England, but have been living in the United States for two sessions. Recently seven years, before that, eight years. I have spent 50 years working in the hog industry, since 1954, have lived in China for two years working with hogs, in Bucharest, Eastern Europe for two years, and have worked in over 20 countries.

So I'm currently a consultant with the Animal Welfare Institute, which is a New York based charity of which I will talk more later. I would just like to outline my production, some of the things that I would like to talk about, production systems, briefly, some results and costs; about straw and manure, about which we have heard this morning already; about the environment; about marketing; animal welfare; and then some conclusions.

There is a supply chain existing already in the United States and Europe which begins with the producer and ends with the
consumer, and it is a relatively new movement. Currently we have in most developed countries where pig production is taking place, we have confinement, we have got the outdoor system, we have got the straw-based alternative, and we have got organic. I'm going to go past the confinement system, you have probably heard lots of evidence already about confinement systems.

The outdoor in Manitoba is clearly a non starter, as it is in the Midwest of America, from an all year round point of view. In the U.S.A. occasionally we will get pigs out of doors in the Midwest. In England, we would have a system that operates all year round outdoors, but that is specific to the climate in England, where we've applied the rules from indoor production to outdoors. So it is outdoor mating, outdoor farrowing, outdoor weaning 52 weeks in the year. Clearly impossible in this particular climate.

So we must look at some of the alternatives. And one of the systems that has been developed we call the Swedish style, where the mating takes place here. This stage, the gestation for 12 weeks, the farrowing in boxes, and I will come back to that later. The weaners
in deep bedding, and then the finishing stage in
deep straw and bedding. If we just look at that
briefly, the climate in Sweden is very similar to
here in Manitoba, we have the totally enclosed
system here. We have got the sows in gestation,
and this is very relevant at the present time, in
deep bedding systems with individual feeders, and
the decision by Smithfield and Maple Leaf to move
from gestation stalls is very relevant. The
alternative already exists.

And the straw system in Sweden is
highly mechanized. The round bale is used and
brought inside mechanically and used for bedding
the pigs. The farrowing can take place in
individual pens, voluntary farrowing crates, no
restriction, and there are two systems that work.
In both cases the total farrowing system can be
dismantled to leave the sow and litters running
together in a straw-based system. And so at the
end of the day we have a group of pigs, perhaps
six or eight sows, up to ten sows and 50 or of 60
pigs running together in deep straw, who then
continue in deep straw to the point of slaughter,
to 50 to 60 pounds.

So that is the Swedish system, the
technology exists, and the performance is very similar to that that is obtained in confinement units, say in Manitoba and the Midwest.

The other alternative to that is to use a -- just look at some results here from that farm that we looked at in Sweden. We will get this right here. Just last year when I visited, along with some of the academic staff from the University of Minnesota and Iowa, the number of sows in this particular herd, 135; live born per litter, 12.6; weaned per litter, 10.4; lactation period, six weeks; non productive sow days, 10; and piglet weight at 69 days, 30 kilos. So a very similar performance and in some cases better than we get in intensive systems. So that is the Swedish systems.

As an alternative to that we look at what I call, it is a mixed Midwest/European system, where we have small pens in the mating, straw yards with groups of individual feeding, we have individual farrowing pens, and then we have large groups which may be in straw yards, may be in deep bedding, may be in hoop buildings, which were mentioned earlier today. And hoop buildings again have been widely used in Canada. It looks
something like this with, again, the deep bedding,
the individual feeding of the sow, the individual
farrowing of the sow. This is just an alternative
to stall systems -- you can't see that -- an
alternative to stall systems here, based on straw.
This is the electronic sow feeding system here
with the feed stations, the deep bedding, the
straw, and the sow feeding stations. The
individual sow feeding here, which I call the
voluntary farrowing crate, widely used in England
certainly until 40 years ago, and then in the
interests of confinement was abandoned, is now
coming full circle back into use. So it is
interesting to see how this has developed.

The sows are then often, as in the
Swedish system, grouped together, and grouped
together with deep straw bedding and straw
available, and then in the final stages may be
housed in buildings. This is from Denmark, the
use of big bales here to produce a hoop building,
or the more traditional hoop building which we see
in the Midwest, the hoop building again.

And this week there has been a report
from the University of Iowa, Iowa State actually,
a three-year experiment with hoop buildings, and
the cost for the gestating sow was one-third below
the cost of confinement systems, the productivity
was higher, and the end result was that there was
an 11 per cent reduction in the cost of the pig,
of the weaner pig. So that stopped press, the
report produced this week. This is the pig again
in the hoop building.

So from there, just let's have a look
briefly at the use of straw, in Canada widely
available, not so widely available in the U.S.A.
The U.S.A. has corn stalks. We have a choice of
wheat, barley, oats, tricaly. It is essential
that it is dust free and weed free. We have
mechanical systems in the field and in the barn,
and we have the Hesston bale, the round bale, or
the conventional bale.

The point about straw, of course, is
that it is a buffer against environmental
conditions, especially thermal. For instance, the
critical temperature for a sow in a gestation
stall would be 20 degrees C. If you have a group
of sows in straw, that temperature requirement
would drop to 15 or 16 degrees, energy saving at
every point here. The straw of course can be
eaten, excellent source of fiber. We have the
natural nesting activity of the sow before farrowing, and it is a material that can help in the reduction of stereotypical behaviour, for instance, tail biting. So from that point of view, very good from an animal welfare point of view.

Some considerations on straw: Of course here, I think widely available, especially wheat straw. We have got the cost, the transport, the mechanical handling, the removal from buildings, and its use as a solid manure. And here we have got a picture of a solid manure. So this is the typical product at the end of the day.

We can do several things with what I call farmyard manure. We can spread direct from the barn, or we can have field storage, we can storage on a concrete pad, we need to have cover, and prevent runoff. We have enormous compost potential. The spreading rate would be 5 to 20 tonnes per acre. It improves soil structure with the humus and the organic incorporation of material with the humus buildup. We have reduced odour, and NPK value varies very widely, but would be in the range NPK 15-7-15. That is the soil order we have. So that is the benefit of the
Now the alternative systems that I have described are really one chain in the link from producer through to the end consumer. What we are looking at here is a marketing system from producers. You see, I'm referring to what is known in the United States as the niche market, which spills over to farmers markets. I want to talk about Niman Ranch, and Whole Foods and the Iowa experience with several organizations that they have at the present time that help in this matter. If I speak for a minute about the Niman Ranch Pork Company, California headquarters, but the pork ranch is based in Iowa, standards for pigs, over 400 family pork producers in the Midwest. We were talking earlier about the family farm. And they have a set of regulations which must be followed and are best followed through the straw-based system. Each farm must sign an affidavit that the pigs have never been given antibiotics, there have not been any form of growth promoting hormones or steroids, raised on pasture or deeply bedded pans, have not been fed meat or meat byproducts or any kind of animal fat. So those are the basic outlines for Niman Ranch.
As I said, there are 400 farms spread from Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota. Niman Ranch began 10 years ago, the pork arm of Niman Ranch. It acts as a buyer of the pigs. It is a very loose cooperative. The farmer, providing he follows the rules, is then at the end of the day given a premium. That premium may be in a region of $8 to $10 a pig, which compensates the farmers for producing pigs under this alternative system.

The other aspect of Niman Ranch is that it follows animal welfare programs written by the Animal Welfare Institute. Other organizations also have their animal welfare rules, but basically they are based on what we call, and I think you are all familiar with the five freedoms of animal welfare, freedom from hunger and thirst, discomfort, pain, injury and disease, and this last one here, the last two, the freedom to express normal behaviour and freedom from fear and distress. So those are the major points I think from an animal welfare point of view.

The main point currently that the industries around the world are concerned with in animal welfare would be the gestation crate. And we have seen already the mention I have made of
Smithfield and Maple Leaf, in the United States, more recently Cargill at certain States in the United States have banned the use of gestation crates.

Practical issues on animal welfare include the sick, euthanasia, feed interruption, and some recent books I think very interesting, "Omnivore's Dilemma" by Michael Pollan, which looks at this whole business of alternative systems, and "The Fast Food Nation" by Eric Schlosser.

I want to have a look briefly at some of the other factors that are involved in this chain of supply. We have sustainable systems, we have support from the Leopold Centre in Iowa, in the Midwest, which is linked to the University of Iowa State. We have money from the Kellogg Foundation and other trust funds around the U.S.A. We need more training and information still, in spite of the fact that the system is up and running, and we need and we already get a premium for welfare. Not totally for welfare, because it is a premium for taste and flavour and quality of food, and how the food is produced. And in most developed countries, particularly in the U.S.A.
and Western Europe, there is already a group or a number of customers, a segment is probably the right word, of customers who are prepared to pay extra, an extra cost at the end of the day in the marketplace for the food, for the pig meat that is produced in these alternative systems.

So I think I will leave the point there and invite questions. Thank you very much indeed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sir, what are some of the downsides of a straw-based system?

MR. THORNTON: It is not for large-scale production. I could not design a two and a half thousand sow unit, which is typical of some of the units in Manitoba, that would be based on the straw-based system. The Niman Ranch system really is family farmed, it is for family farmers, farmers who must, as owners, be involved in the farm business. And the range of sows would be from 20 sows at the lower end to 300 sows to 500 sows, and the average again is much lower than that. So the downside is the size of operation. There is no way that the alternative system could sweep away existing confinement systems, but it certainly could offer an alternative on a niche
basis, and would lead to changes in the way
confinement systems are operated at the present
time.

THE CHAIRMAN: We've heard that
particularly keeping hogs outside can lead to
disease problems.

MR. THORNTON: Yes, that is a valid
point. In fact, one of the reasons the Midwest
moved from extensive outdoor systems to indoor
systems was because of the spread of disease.
Brucellosis was one, and there were other diseases
that were spread from farm to farm with outdoor
pigs. But I think that is a possibility, that
could happen.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have also heard at
one meeting, in very colourful language, about
aggressive behaviour among sows. The colourful
language we heard was, have you ever seen a pig's
vagina ripped out?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, I have seen it in
lots of situations. Mixing of sows is not easy,
it is a management skill. And the large farms, at
the end of the day, in confinement, will have to
find a system to mix their sows at weaning to have
them in groups of gestation. In Europe by 2013,
the gestation stall and tether stall is illegal. It has been illegal in England since 1999. And they have found a way of grouping the sows during gestation without loss of production. And the American industry, the North American industry is heading in the same direction and will have to follow the same management rules to do that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now, perhaps you could give us more information on the British and European practices, or soon to be practice. Will the removal of the gestation pens, will that lead necessarily to group, or will it just lead to a larger pen that is open, that allows them --

MR. THORNTON: Yes, it could lead into two directions; it could be lead into group housing, groups of six or twelve, or in the case of the work at the Prairie Swine Centre in Saskatoon, where they have done a lot of work with group housing with slatted floors, it could lead to 50 sows, 60 sows, 100 sows in the group, so that is one direction. Or it could lead to an individual pen in which the sow can totally turn around. That is almost impractical and very high cost, so I think that alternative will not happen. So we are headed, I think, towards group systems.
The beauty of the straw system is that it acts as a buffer in that group housing system. As I said, Iowa State have just completed this three-year experiment, and the production from sows housed in group systems on straw in a hoop building, the productivity has increased.

THE CHAIRMAN: So you are offering these suggestions as alternatives, you are not saying that the whole industry should or must go in that direction?

MR. THORNTON: No, no. I don't want that misunderstanding. This is a niche industry. But, for instance, in the United States, the niche industry, if I add the Niman Ranch pigs all together, if I added all of the pigs together that are produced on straw or outdoor systems, probably the best estimate is 750,000 hogs per year slaughtered, and it could be by the end of next year a million. Now, it is a million hogs against the total annual slaughter, which is probably in excess of 85 probably 90 million pigs per year, so on a percentage basis it is quite small, but it is growing and it is growing rapidly.

In the developed countries, in fact, the increasing pig production is slowing. It is
in the underdeveloped companies where pig meat production is increasing. So this is a huge growth market. Again, it is the smaller unit, it is straw based, it needs a Niman Ranch organization to orchestrate, to work the system, they buy the pig, they offer a premium, they sell the pig at the end of the day to a white table restaurant. And if you go into a restaurant in Chicago or Des Moines, or East or West Coast, it would be a Niman Ranch entree which will be well priced by any standards, but which consumers are willing to pay because of the flavour and the taste, and the way in which the animal is produced from an environmental point of view, from a welfare point of view, from a taste and flavour point of view.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just out of curiosity, would it be identified on the menu as Niman Ranch?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, it would indeed.

THE CHAIRMAN: So it is well enough known?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, it is a very widely recognized brand name in the U.S.A. It also sells pork and pork products to a chain restaurant called Chilpolte, which is Mexican
based, which is owned partially by McDonald's.
But this restaurant, Chilpolte, sells fast food
and it is all based on alternative systems of
production, and well advertised inside of their
restaurants.

THE CHAIRMAN: And how much is the
premium?

MR. THORNTON: The premium on a pig
would be in the range of $5 to $8 per hundred
weight live. So at the end of the day the farmer
might get $10. It is a sliding scale with a
floor. The safety net is very important. We
don't go back to a period in the Midwest, say of
1998, where hogs were 10 cents a pound. So we
have a floor in the system, a sliding scale which
rewards that producer for doing the job. It is a
system which I say blends all of these various
aspects together, sustainable, reduction in odour,
it is a natural system producing the solid manure
back to the farm. Particularly in Manitoba where
you have a huge production of wheat, the United
States has a problem with small grains production,
it is mainly a corn producer. And it is an entry
for first time farmers, first time farmers will
come into this niche market easier than they can
get into a huge confinement system. The capital costs are much lower.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Wayne.

MR. MOTHERAL: Just a couple of questions, Mr. Thornton. On one of your beginning presentations, it is hard when we don't have the information here in front of us, and I have forgotten, but I believe it was in Sweden you talked about the birth rate of 12.6 piglets and then the weaning of 10 point something; is that right?

MR. THORNTON: Yes.

MR. MOTHERAL: The difference would be the mortality, would it?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, which in that calculation would be around 12 per cent, I think.

MR. MOTHERAL: Is that a normal mortality rate in a system?

MR. THORNTON: Yes. Let's put it this way, that a well-run large scale confinement unit with all mod coms, highly mechanized, well supported, well organized, may occasionally get its pre-weaning mortality down to 8, 10 per cent, in that range. I have worked in this business for many, many years, and so that is the sort of going
rate. That is a target, it can be achieved occasionally.

In an alternative system, it may well be 11 to 12 per cent, not much different, but there is a difference in the cost, in the capital cost of setting up that system.

So I'm not going to say that the alternative system will match a well run confinement in terms of pre-weaning mortality, but in terms of weight gain, in terms of feed efficiency, in terms of cost of production, which is a major part of pig production in the wean to finish stage, it is equivalent and sometimes better.

MR. MOTHERAL: Okay, I believe you have answered my question. Just one more thing, weed free straw, how important is that and how feasible is it? I know almost to me as a farmer, weed free straw is an oxymoron. You would have to have a weed free field then. But how important is that in straw?

MR. THORNTON: I just throw that out, I'm not an agronomist, I like more dust free than weed free, but you are familiar with that production of herbicides. I suspect that a lot of
straw would be reasonably weed free. I'm thinking
of contaminants like ergot, for instance, that
could be a problem in straw bed systems, but it is
very rare.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin.

MR. YEE: Yes. Thank you,

Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of very quick
questions. In your presentation on the Swedish
style, you indicated 135 sows. Is that about the
average or does it vary? Similar to you mentioned
the Niman Ranch operation goes from 20 to 500?

MR. THORNTON: 25 sows to three or
400, that sort of range.

MR. YEE: Right.

MR. THORNTON: Sweden -- generally the
American industry, from a technology point of view
from confinement, has gone in leaps and bounds in
the last 15 to 20 years with these huge units of
two and a half thousand sows, 6,000 sows, 10,000
sows on one site. That is totally unheard of in
Europe, because of welfare regulations, because of
planning regulations, because of land use
regulations. Because planning, in particular, it
is almost impossible in England, you could not
build a Manitoba style confinement unit because it would just be out of the question, the aesthetics of the business, of maintaining the village, the town, the boundaries, the countryside, the appearance. So this is a big factor in size of unit in a country like England, even in a country like Germany, and certainly in the Scandinavian countries.

MR. YEE: So in Sweden there would be no large confinement operations?

MR. THORNTON: Large would be four or 500 sows, small would be in the range 50 to 70, that is the sort of range. England would have, I don't think in England I know of a thousand sow unit, whereas here I wouldn't have to go very far here to find several in the range of two to 3,000 sow units on one site. That is the difference and that is where we have gone, and probably it is not too late to turn back. We are not going to upset the confinement industry, or turn it over overnight totally, but the system that I'm describing is well founded, technically sound, environmentally sound, friendly to the pig from a welfare point of view, friendly to the operators, and sustainable and has a long term future.
MR. YEE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thornton, you did talk a little bit about manure management. What ecological environmental benefits are there from a straw-based system? I mean, we have been asked specifically in broad terms to look at the environmental sustainability of the industry.

MR. THORNTON: Yes, I think, again, it is a return of manure to the land in reasonable amounts. There is no runoff, there is very little pollution, there is no odour. That is how I describe it. I can't quantify it exactly, but those are the main benefits that we have. We can store, we can compost, we can wait until we have a window when we can spread the manure, and so we have more flexibility than we have say with liquid manure in the lagoon.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I don't think we have any more questions. Thank you very much for coming here today, sir.

Finally this morning, Mr. Sid Baumel. SID BAUMEL, having been sworn, presented as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. BAUMEL: Thank you. First of all,
good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. And my
thanks to Keith Thornton for his brilliant and
enlightening presentation, and to the CEC for
funding it.

Animal Watch Manitoba looks forward to
a day when people no longer kill animals for food
except for survival, and the burden of being at
the same time lovers and admirers and protectors
of other animals, and tormentors and killers of
other animals has been lifted from our
consciences. Until that day, animal farming must
at the very least become much more humane and
sustainable. Keith has pointed the way for our
province to do this at a time when consumers are
finally starting to see through the shrink wrap to
the ugly realities beneath.

An objective scientific approach to
sustainability requires us not only to ask what is
sustainable hog production, but whether other
means of feeding ourselves in the world would be
significantly more sustainable, as broadly defined
by the Province's Sustainable Development Act,
which includes not only preservation of the
physical environment but of human health as well.

National food guides accurately tell
us that pork's primary role in the human diet is as a source of protein, excess protein, unfortunately, for North Americans who eat well beyond their protein needs, which promotes kidney failure in old age. Pork is also very often a source of excess calories, feeding the epidemic of obesity and obesity-related illnesses.

High quality epidemiologic studies also suggest that the more pork, particularly cured pork, people eat, the higher is their risk for several cancers, including the usually terminal pancreatic cancer.

In contrast, the staple proteins of a plant based diet, especially beans and nuts, but also grains, especially whole grains, are all associated in long-term human studies with less chronic degenerative disease and greater longevity.

Manitoba has no problem growing beans and grains, and even the nutritionally exceptional nut of the hemp plant. Our geography doesn't compel us to become the pork basket of the planet, and yet Manitoba produces and exports more pork and more pigs than any other province, well over 90 per cent of what we produce, and this is in a
country that is a leading exporter of edible pig
products, the number one exporter of pork itself,
according to the FAO.

A paper published in 2003 in the
American Journal of Clinical Nutrition can help us
grasp the extreme environmental inefficiencies of
producing pork as a source of protein. The
authors of this paper which is titled
"Quantification of the Environmental Impact of
Different Dietary Protein Choices" are Lucas
Reijnders, PhD, who is an environmental scientist
and professor at the University of Amsterdam, and
Sam Soret, PhD, who is chair of the Department of
Environmental and Occupational Health at Loma
Linda University, School of Public Health. These
are well credentialed scientists writing in a peer
reviewed scientific journal that is to nutrition
what the journal of the American Medical
Association is to medicine.

According to Reijnders and Soret, the
protein conversion efficiency of pork is about 9
per cent. That means that producers have to feed
11 pounds of vegetable protein to pigs in order to
produce just one pound of pork protein. This is a
spectacularly inefficient way to feed a world
where nearly one billion people go hungry every day. Why is a would-be green and socially responsible province like Manitoba supporting a recipe for even more world hunger?

What about climate change? Reijnders and Soret write,

"Depending on the relative intensities of agricultural practices...", and by intensities they mean the spectrum of from organic through to the most non-organic or intensive ways of producing pork and other commodities,

"...the efficiency of fossil fuel use may be a factor 2.5-50 better for vegetable proteins if compared with animal husbandry."

In other words, the greenhouse gas impact of animal agriculture is at least two and a half times and as much as 50 times greater than the impact of growing protein rich crops for human consumption.

The impact of pork production is so high because the greenhouse gas emissions from the hog barns themselves, the CO2 and the methane from the pigs, the nitrous oxide from the manure, are
only part of the story. There is also all of that feed. Whatever it costs in greenhouse gas emissions to produce the corn, the barley, the soy or other feed grains, you have to multiply that by ten or so to get the same amount of pork protein, which is the end product that pork is produced for.

What about the efficiency of turning calories of fossil fuel into calories of food? According to a peer reviewed study by geophysicists Gidon Eshel and Pamela Martin of the University of Chicago, it takes 27 calories of fossil fuel to produce one calorie of pork. In contrast, according to their calculations and data, it only takes one calorie of fossil fuel to produce over four calories of soy, two and a half calories of corn, 1.2 calories of potatoes, and even a little over one calorie of apples.

When it comes to climate change, diet is the new transportation. Meat production, especially intensive non-organic production, which obviously is the kind that predominates in Manitoba right now, is a global warming machine. Last year the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, in a 390 page monograph entitled
"Livestock's Long Shadow" calculated that nothing we humans do, not even transportation, is fueling global warming more than global livestock production. Why is Manitoba peddling an SUV diet in the global marketplace?

I'm not here to argue that everyone must become a vegan or a vegetarian, or that Manitoba must get out of the livestock business, because I know that is an argument I just can't win. But just as we all accept that we must use less fossil fuel in transportation, heating and so on, if we are objective, we must also recognize the need to trim the greenhouse gas flab from our diets and agriculture. And that means eating and producing more beans and grains and less bacon and eggs.

How big is the payoff of doing that? Eshel and Martin, the University of Chicago scientists who I said a moment ago, calculated that the average American diet, which derives 28 per cent of its calories from animal foods, is responsible for approximately one and a half more tons of green house gases as CO2 equivalents per person per year than a fully plant based or vegan diet. One and a half tons, in other words, if you
follow a typical omnivorous diet, you are responsible for one and a half more tons of greenhouse gases compared to a fully plant based diet.

If you cut your consumption of animal foods by a third, you cut your greenhouse gas footprint by half a ton per year. If you cut it by two-thirds, according to Eshel and Martin's calculations, you have just done the equivalent of trading in your Toyota Camry for a Toyota Prius. As a province, should we not be doing the same with our agriculture?

Last year in an Italian study published in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition used standardized ISO 14040 lifecycle assessment methodology to model the sum total of adverse environmental and public health impacts of vegan, vegetarian and omnivorous diets, both conventionally and organically produced. The assessment, the scientists explained, and I'm quoting them here,

"...includes the whole lifecycle of the process or activity, from the extraction and processing of raw materials, to the production,
transportation, distribution, use, re-use, recycling and final disposal."

In other words, Luciana Baroni and her associates applied state of the art science to compare the total farm to plate, to sewer, to lake, to atmosphere, sustainability of nutritionally adequate diets that differed significantly only with respect to their balance of animal and plant foods. As a real world reference -- because these diets were sort of on paper based on their nutritional understanding of balanced diets in the different categories -- as a real world reference, they threw in the average Italian diet which is omnivorous and conventionally produced. The complex methodology of this study passed peer review in a major nutrition journal published by Nature, one of the world's top scientific journals. Baroni and her associates ran their data through three different "perspectives" reflecting the range of scientific uncertainty about environmental and health impacts. These range from relatively conservative to relatively liberal with respect to what kind of impacts one can expect. In every one of the perspectives, the vegan diets, especially the organic vegan diet,
had a dramatically smaller adverse footprint than
the omnivorous diets, especially the
conventionally produced omnivorous diets. When
the perspectives were combined and averaged, the
average impact scores were as follows, in order of
increasing adverse impact.

    The vegan organic diet scored 0.57.
The conventionally produced vegan diet scored
0.81. The vegetarian organic diet scored 0.96.
The omnivorous organic diet scored 1.26. The
conventionally produced vegetarian diet score
1.38. The conventionally produced omnivorous,
which is what most of us are eating, scored 2.14.
And the average Italian diet, and I'm not sure why
this was the case, scored 5.41.

    In other words, the adverse impact of
the conventional omnivorous diet, the kind that
most Manitobans still eat, was nearly four times
as great as the adverse impact of the vegan
organic diet, and nearly twice as great as the
adverse impact of the omnivorous but organic diet,
which is the kind of diet that would be based on
the farming that Keith was describing earlier, and
I am sure many other presenters have described to
you.
Baroni her associates wrote in their conclusions, and I will quote again here, "If animals are considered as food production machines, these machines turn out to be extremely polluting, to have a very high consumption and to be very inefficient. When vegetables are transformed into animal proteins, most of the proteins and energy contained in the vegetables are wasted. The vegetables consumed as feed are used by the animals for their metabolic processes, as well as to build non-edible tissue like bones, cartilage, offal and feces. A shift in eating habits toward the increase in the direct consumption of plant foods seems to be a desirable objective in this perspective. Owing to their lighter impact, confirmed also by our study, vegetarian and vegan diets can play an important role in preserving environmental resources and in reducing hunger and malnutrition in poorer nations."
So what are we to conclude? I would like the panel to very carefully consider the proposition that intensive meat production, including pork, which is about midway on the scale of non-sustainability between dairy and eggs and poultry at the sort of lower end of better sustainability, and grain fed, feed lot finished beef at the high end of non-sustainability, in other words, being the least sustainable. I would like this panel, I would like you to very carefully consider the proposition that intensive meat production, including pork, is inherently incompatible with environmental sustainability, and that intensive meat production on a mass scale such as we have in Manitoba's pork industry is massively incompatible. I would like you to very carefully consider the scientific case for recommending to the Government of Manitoba that it adopt policies to deintensify and scale down the pork industry, while cultivating agricultural opportunities that will help us solve the challenge of local and global sustainability, not exacerbate it. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Baumel. Now, without oversimplifying what you
have just said to us, your view is that by, either reducing the amount of meat produced in the province or by changing the way it is done, we can vastly improve the environment? Is that, in very simple terms, is that your --

MR. BAUMEL: Yes, absolutely, and I think it is a view that is borne out, I know it is a view that is borne out very well by the science. If you check into that with the sources, for example, that I cite in this presentation, I will give you a printed copy later on with the references in it, you will find that that is generally, there is really no contest about that, it is a slam dunk.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Wayne? Edwin?

Thank you very much for coming out here today and for your presentation. We will now break for lunch. We will come back at 1:00 o'clock sharp. We will be resuming at 1:00 o'clock sharp, so come back a few minutes before that.

(PROCEEDINGS RECESSED AT 12:06 p.m. AND RECONVENED AT 1:00 P.M.)
THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. We're going to come to order, please. Please take your seats.
GEORGE DERENCHUCK, having been sworn, presented as follows:
THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.
MR. DERENCHUK: Yes. A presentation to the Clean Environment Commission concerning environmental sustainability of an ever-expanding hog industry in Manitoba.

My name is George Derenchuck, lifetime resident of Winnipeg and a seasonal cottager at Matlock Beach on Lake Winnipeg. I am vitally concerned with regard to the environmental well-being of Lake Winnipeg, especially since numerous e. coli warnings and the presence of green algae formations impact upon quality of life aspects and possible health issues that might arise.

Recently, I reviewed the report, "Nutrient Loading to Lake Winnipeg and Its Watershed, Our Collective Responsibility and Commitment To Action" put out by the Lake Winnipeg stewardship board. I am perplexed to observe that a billion dollar industry, the hog industry in Manitoba is barely mentioned in the report. No
picture of a hog or a hog barn, no picture of a hog lagoon or metal manure storage tank still, no picture of a hog manure spreader spraying the land, but only pictures of cattle. Is this an oversight perhaps?

Is the hog industry immune from sharing some of the responsibility for the plight of Lake Winnipeg? Why does the Lake Winnipeg stewardship board chairman appear in Manitoba Pork Council ads. He's allowed to, but there you are.

Speaking on behalf of the provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Rosanne Wowchuck, at a producer's Manitoba swine seminar held in Winnipeg, February, 1, 2007, Deputy Minister Barry Todd of Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Initiatives, praised farmers for their efforts in alleviating fears, safeguarding the environment, and sustaining the industry. He further praised the hog industry management so they would be workable for producers.

Mr. Deputy Minister, how about being instrumental in developing regulations for manure management utilizing independent, free thinking researchers, who are not beholding to any special interest groups, research not funded by the Pork
Council, research in support of the environment.

If all is well in the hog industry, then why the need for a moratorium on hog barns in this province? Perhaps the Quebec experience helps to explain this need, rapid overexpansion, contaminated waterways. One cannot but help to think that the Department of Agriculture has already decided that a potentially ever-expanding hog industry is sustainable, even before the findings of the Clean Environment Commission are finalized, with recommendations to the Minister of Conservation.

Offering hog producers the solutions that they want at the expense of environmental concerns is most inappropriate, in my view.

Backing up fears with scientific evidence will be the biggest challenge for people striving to restrict the potential massive expansion of the hog industry in Manitoba. So say proponents of hog industry expansion. However, it is essential to keep in mind that such expansion can only lead to adverse consequences should proper controls and enforcement of environmental standards be neglected.

Speaking of scientific evidence, the
Manitoba Pork Council continues to insist that the industry is one and a half per cent responsible for the total phosphorus content load in Lake Winnipeg. In the meantime, Allan Barron, co-chair of the Citizens for the Responsible Application of Phosphorus claims that the ever-expanding hog industry in our province could be responsible for up to 18 per cent of the problem. Who am I to believe, my friends?

Now, I want to refer to a report that I observed, I read this in the Interlake Spectator. In a presentation to the environment hearing, the Whitemouth/Reynolds Soil and Water Conservation Association stated that they were surprised at low nutrient levels in the Whitemouth as compared to other rivers flowing into Lake Winnipeg. One looked at a map of Manitoba shows that Whitemouth runs through or near four provincial forest areas, Northwest Angle, Sandilands, Agassiz and Whiteshell. How can one dare to compare the nutrient runoff from this forested area to flat fertilized farmland in Southern Manitoba? I hope that the Clean Environment Commission noted that this selective study does not represent all of Manitoba's rivers,
for example, the Icelandic River. How about doing a study on that one, my friends?

To continue, the Manitoba Pork Council continues to pressure politicians to ease up on criticism of the hog industry and to promptly remove the moratorium on hog barn expansion. I do hope that our politicians are not captives in the holding pen of the pork industry lobby. More independent and free thinking research is needed before the moratorium is lifted.

The Manitoba Pork Council insists that the Manitoba Hog Industry is held to stringent environmental standards, over-regulated, but fails to mention that enforcement practices are often lacking and could stand improvement.

Permit me to share with you a summary of some of the environmental mishaps and misdemeanors that have been identified in other jurisdictions, as well as in Manitoba. These revelations do not require scientific proof, rather these are self-evident.

Permit me to continue. The first one, "Dead Hogs Discovered," Interlake Spectator, May 12, 2006. Twenty dead hogs piled in a wooded area adjacent to a brand new hog barn just north of
Arborg. The fine was just $500 out of a possible $50,000 fine. So much for enforcement.

Second item, "Manitoba Conservation Probes Manure Spill," CBC News, April 28, 2006. A 1.5 million litre spill, manure spill at the Kasmsley Hutterite Colony 60 kilometres south of Portage la Prairie. The manure spill reached the Cypress River. The colony must properly repair an earthen storage unit for manure. What's the problem? Why didn't they look after this in the first place instead of spending money on public relations tactics?

Next item, "Hog Farm Ordered to Cover Manure." A 6 million-gallon manure storage area in Southern Manitoba is causing excessive farm odour. The Farm Practices Board has ordered Pircardy Farms to cover their manure by June 1st. I think they should have ordered them to cover it a lot sooner. What's the hold up here?

Next item, "Pork, Premium Standard Produces Smell of Money." This references to the St. Louis Missouri area, St. Louis Post Dispatch, December 26, 2006, "Premium Standard Produces the Smell of Money." Premium Standard Farms Incorporated, the second largest U.S. hog
producer, will pay $4.5 million to six plaintiffs who claim that odours from one of its swine farms interfered with their ability to enjoy their properties, a quality of life issue. Premium Standard Farm produces about 4.1 million hogs annually. They are forced to pay the fine.

Now I am told by people in the pork industry that the odour is negligible or whatever. Well, my friends, look at the research.

Next item, Maple Leaf fined more than $600,000 for violations at the Dundas plant, Stony Creek News, November 4, 2005. Eighteen charges were laid, including causing adverse odour, discharging excessive amounts of effluent, failing to comply with a provincial order to commission two of its lagoons. After the fine was paid, this company spent $49 million to upgrade their ancient operation. And in spite of spending 49 million to upgrade their operation, they were fined again.

I am told that with the proposed Olywest plant to come to Winnipeg, that everything will be A-1. Well, just a minute, friends, let's be realistic here.

Next item, City of Winnipeg variance order, Granny's Poultry request for a zoning
variance. Oh by the way, with regard to the Maple Leaf fine, 600,000, I have before me -- I do tax work for a living -- a Manitoba odour control tax credit form. When I do tax work for a farm return, farm people are allowed to claim a Manitoba odour control tax credit. Yet I'm told by powers that be, odour, what odour? How come the province has to resort to this if there is no such thing as odour? Give me a break, folks.

Now, getting back to the variance order, City of Winnipeg. Granny's Poultry were looking for a new plant location for their hatchery and office complex. They took a look at the St. Boniface Industrial park location, but realizing that there was to be an Olywest plant to be placed to that area, they decided to look elsewhere because they were fearful of possible biological health contamination of the hatchery unit if there were to be a hog processing and rendering plant right next to their location. So guess what, they looked for another location in Transcona. They found another location, but that location was zoned M3, the same as the St. Boniface Industrial Park is. Granny's Poultry were able to convince the City of Winnipeg zoning
authorities to change the zoning from an M3 down
to an M2, so that in future there couldn't
possibly be a pork processing plant built next to
their hatchery. And I have the evidence here
because I attended the variance meeting and they
sent me the results. I have it here.

So, my friends, I am wondering why
Mr. Doer and Mr. Katz didn't do their homework in
terms of anticipating that placing a hog
processing and rendering plant into a location
where we already have an existing Vita Health
Foods operation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Derenchuck, we are
not here to review the Olywest, and if you keep
going off on tangents, you won't finish your main
presentation.

MR. DERENCHUK: Thank you very much.
The hog industry is not in a particularly strong
economic position at this time and this leads
smaller independent producers to accept contracts
with larger factory farm vertical integrators.
Confinement feeding becomes the order of the day,
and such practices as confinement feeding as
opposed to open range small operation feeding
procedures lead to severe waste management
problems. That is to say liquified hog manure. You get more of that happening when you resort to confinement feeding in a cage, factory farm, industrial factory farm system. Guess what, folks, it's more economical to do that for the operators, so they hose out the contaminants and then it's placed into holding tanks and placed into lagoons, and then it is spread on neighboring farmer's fields.

Properly enforced regulatory strategies must be followed if we are to reassure the public that the threat to water quality caused by the spreading of liquified manure is controlled. The larger hog operation barns should only participate in the application of often untreated liquified hog manure based upon soil tests and actual crop needs, the practice of buying up marginal farmland, not really sustainable for the growth of crops, and requiring little or no fertilizer, merely for the purpose of providing a venue for liquid waste dispersal must be curtailed. Rotation schedules should be completed, registered with Manitoba Conservation authorities and strictly adhered to.

Economic accommodation factors should
never be allowed to overpower environmental sustainability as it affects quality of life aspects and the environmental health of Lake Winnipeg.

Now I'm going to quote Laura Rance in her article, "Complex Issues Face Pork Producers," Winnipeg Free Press, February 12, 2007. "It is one thing for industry to lobby. It is another for government to buy its rhetoric."

Perhaps the greatest risk to the hog industry's growth isn't a government imposed pause itself, the moratorium, but that second sober thought will prevail. It may also be its greatest chance for a viable future.

I appeal to the Clean Environment Commission to support further independent, free thinking research with reference to hog industry expansion and environmental concerns as a result of such expansion. Limits to growth are sometimes the correct path to follow. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Derenchuk. Thank you, sir, thank you for coming out this afternoon and preparing this presentation.
Now, I'm informed that David Hedman, who was to be our first presenter this afternoon, will not be presenting. The next on the agenda is Hilary Versavel. Is she here? No? Louise Hedman.

LOUISE HEDMAN, having been sworn, presented as follows:

MS. HEDMAN: Hello, my name is Louise Hedman. I am here today to share my story of how the hog industry in Manitoba has affected my life and to present some of my views on the industry. Some of the things I may say may fall outside of your guidelines. If they do, maybe just let me know.

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MS. HEDMAN: What I say is in no way motivated by financial gain. I am a busy mother of two young children and took time off of work to be here.

I was introduced to the hog industry on November 23, 2005, when Winnipeg City Council voted in favour of the Olywest deal, with only nine days notice. It was at that time I was able to see the report dated November 16th, 2005, prepared by Olywest and the city. The contents
shocked me. The Olywest consortium were proposing to situate a live hog barn which would house 4,000 hogs, a 16-hour per day slaughter, rendering and processing schedule, relentless traffic volumes, and all this within city limits. It was intended to transport these trucks full of hogs directly in front of existing homes and businesses. It was then I realized just how close they were intending to put this facility to my home and community. That was when the battle began.

The conduct and tactics of the industry was revealed in May of 2006. A rally was planned at City Hall to show City Council that the citizens of Winnipeg and surrounding communities did not approve of the deal made to locate a hog barn, slaughter house and rendering factory within city limits. The City's own report stated that there would be a need to increase the amount of hog barns within a hundred kilometre range of the city to feed the plant.

Little did we know, Olywest had conspired with city officials well before the day of the rally to allow themselves, their proponents, and their paid actors into council chambers over an hour and a half before the
scheduled opening. Tax paying citizens of this city locked out of the gallery and treated like animals behind bars. The people that filled these seats were almost exclusively from outside Winnipeg, even in at least one instance out of province. It was at that moment I realized these people would stop at nothing to get what they wanted.

Since that day, we have had Olywest people park outside our home and then make a point of telling us they know where we live. I would like to ask anyone in this room if these sound like the actions of good corporate citizens that they claim to be?

The hog industry is continually trying to make the point that continued expansion is needed to save existing hog producers from financial ruin. To that I would say, hog producers did okay 10 years ago when the hog population was two million. Through government approval and support, by using taxpayer dollars, the industry has been allowed to grow to 10 million. Karl Kynoch, chairman of the Manitoba Pork Council has stated in the Pork Council's newsletter that if Olywest were to be relocated
outside of Winnipeg, it would require even more
public tax dollars. I must have missed the day
when their absolute right to our tax dollars was
proclaimed. This has only served to create a
great deal of wealth for a few select
corporations, while squeezing out small family
farms.

The industry claims they are
responsible for 1 per cent of the pollution in
Lake Winnipeg. I am not a scientist, but as I
think about it, it seems totally illogical, given
that there are 10 million hogs in the province and
only 1.5 million people. Hogs produce four times
as much waste as people. This would equate
dropping 40 million people into a band across
Southern Manitoba and spreading the untreated
waste on the fields. If field application can
miraculously make this huge volume of waste
magically disappear, the solution to Winnipeg's
contribution to Lake Winnipeg would be to stop
treating the waste at the treatment plants and
simply spread it on the fields. This method,
unfortunately, may limit the areas available for
pig waste. Unacceptable, of course, if you
subscribe to the pigs before the people concept.
I would like to present the picture from the urban point of view. People who reside here have made probably the biggest investment of their lives with the purchase of their homes. They chose to live in the city for various reasons. They did not choose to live on or near a farm. What gives the corporate pig farmers the right to decide they are going to locate a plant smack dab in the middle of these homes, over the rights of the people living in these homes? The government has allowed a conflict to be created by not considering all aspects of the situation and by only bending over backwards to the hog representatives.

The glossy brochures, newspaper and billboard ads all like to portray hog farmers as young families just starting out in the world who need the industry to expand in order to survive. The problem is that greed begins to take over and there is always a desire for more. The large corporations start to approach small farmers with offers to expand their operations for them and to use their land to make the barns bigger and bigger. It now becomes a corporate business and is no longer a small family farm.
OlyWest's glossy brochure shows a smiling family barbequing pork. I'm not sure what the message is here. Probably that without this plant in our community people that enjoy pork won't be able to buy it, or maybe Olywest pork will be better than the pork available now, or maybe these people are happy to live beside a rendering plant because their property value increased? Don't laugh because this is actually implied in the first brochure they mailed out.

There are many of us who tried to get information about the permits, inspections and enforcement of regulations on specific hog operations so that we could make informed presentations to this panel, but have been told that due to the volume of requests and limited staff, this information will not be provided for a very long time, well after this process has been concluded. Not enough staff. I would say too many pigs is the problem, and my opinion is the staff should be increased and the industry should pay.

Respectfully to you, the members of the CEC, I don't believe any of you would be happy to live beside a hog barn or a rendering plant.
My home is situated within one kilometre of where they propose to transport the hogs to the slaughter house and rendering factory. Olywest continually tries to downplay the true distance between the trucks and the factory and our homes, schools, daycare and churches. Let's not forget the various types of businesses established in the industrial park.

The community of Transcona has been there since the early 1900s, farmhouses were everywhere. The industrial park in question was established in the late 1980s with no intent whatsoever to allow heavy industry to operate there.

One of the things that struck me as very odd, as I drove through hog alley in Southern Manitoba, was the mass amounts of hog complexes with numerous exhaust fans protruding from the sides and not a sign of human life, no farmhouse, no people, no animals, just stink. Where is the justice when the hog producers erect huge confined animal farming operations in closer proximity to innocent non hog farming people's homes than their own? The owners of these satellite barn's homes are nowhere in sight.
I have spent thousands of hours educating myself on the corporate hog industry and how it operates. If the public actually knew all the details how factory meat is raised, the practices of the hog industry -- the practice the hog industry accept as standard procedure would be surely outlawed.

My story is just one of thousands across North America. I have heard stories from people all over this country who have the same concerns as I do. This Olywest proposal has created a controversy unlike any other.

I am asking the CEC to carefully review the presentations put forth throughout these meetings by the ordinary people, the people who are not benefiting financially, the people who are using their own unpaid time to make the effort to present the other side of the story, the people who are trying to protect their homes, businesses, farmsteads, investments, families, and most importantly, trying to preserve the air and water quality of this province for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. Don't be lead astray by fancy presentations, advertising, or slick talking PR guys. Deep down people know what is right and
wrong, sometimes they just forget. Profit over
people's rights appears to be the wave of the
future.

Thanks for allowing me to tell my
story.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Hedman.
You were correct at the outset saying that you may
not be terribly germane to our current mandate,
but I did allow you the opportunity to say your
piece.

You note, or you mention at one point
that when the industrial park, the St. Boniface
industrial park was set up in the '80s, there was
a clear intention, at least you say that, that
heavy industry would not be allowed to operate
there. What constitutes heavy industry?

MS. HEDMAN: M3.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, M3?

MS. HEDMAN: M3.

THE CHAIRMAN: And there was never an
intention for it to be an M3?

MS. HEDMAN: Mr. Bernie Wolfe was
involved in setting up that park, and he has
spoken out on numerous occasions that that was
never the intent. It was supposed to be a high
tech industrial sort of a park and never meant for
M3.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. You also
mentioned on your last page about driving through
what you call hog alley in Southern Manitoba, and
you say there was just stink. Where did you
encounter the just stink?

MS. HEDMAN: Pretty much --

THE CHAIRMAN: Where were you, driving
on highways or roadways?

MS. HEDMAN: We have friends that live
in Kleefield, and we visit them on lots of
occasions. And in the spring when they spread the
manure and throughout the summer, it's just in the
air, thick in the air everywhere.

THE CHAIRMAN: And what is the source
of this smell?

MS. HEDMAN: It's manure being spread
on the fields.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it the spread manure
that stinks all summer or --

MS. HEDMAN: I believe so, or the
exhaust from the barns, a combination of both.

THE CHAIRMAN: And how big is the hog
operation in question, do you know?
MS. HEDMAN: There is several of them all over the place. They are everywhere you look.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Edwin?

MR. YEE: Oh, yes, thank you,

Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Hedman, you noted in your presentation about the concept of these large corporations, and you have indicated where small farms are being offered to expand by these corporations, they no longer become a small family farm but a part of the corporation. I was just wondering, we have heard many presentations and we have heard from father/son operations that have relatively large number of hogs in their operation. Would you consider those to be corporate operations?

MS. HEDMAN: Probably it depends who is actually running the operation. Is it really the father and the son or is it another company?

MR. YEE: Yes, it is. It was the father and son in this particular instance.

MS. HEDMAN: It depends on how many livestock do they have.

MR. YEE: It was a fairly large hog operation, this was in Southern Manitoba. I can't
remember the exact number, but it was over a
thousand, I believe.

MS. HEDMAN: That would probably be
considered a smaller one, in my eyes.

MR. YEE: So they wouldn't be
considered a corporate operation?

MS. HEDMAN: Well, what I'm referring
to there is a company like Hytek, for instance, or
Maple Leaf operating as something other than Maple
Leaf and going in and purchasing properties,
putting up large hog barns, sort of under the
disguise of the owner of the property, things like
that.

MR. YEE: Would you view the Hutterite
colonies as corporate operations?

MS. HEDMAN: I believe some of them
are. They are actually owned, or operated, or
jointly by large companies like Maple Leaf. So
some may be, some may not be.

MR. YEE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
Ms. Hedman.

MS. HEDMAN: Thanks.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now, is Hilary Versavel
here yet? Twyla Francois? We might have an
easier afternoon than we had anticipated. Curtis
Ewacha?

Well, those were the people that we
had, who had indicated they wished to make
presentations this afternoon between 1:00 and
3:00 o'clock. At 3:00 and at 4:00, we have two
sort of major wrap-up presentations by, first by a
collective of environmental groups, and finally by
the Manitoba Pork Council. The three or four
people who had indicated they wished to speak are
not here yet. We will adjourn. When they show
up, if they show up, we will reconvene. Otherwise
we will definitely be back here at 3:00 o'clock
sharp. But if others show up, those who had
indicated, Ms. Versavel, Francois or Mr. Ewacha,
we will reconvene.

(Proceedings recessed at 1:39 p.m. and
reconvened at 1:47 p.m.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we come back to
order, please? We have one of the scheduled
people has shown up and she is ready to proceed.
She has asked for and will have up to a half an
hour for the presentation. Can you please take
your seats?
TWYLA FRANCOIS, having been sworn,

presented as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MS. FRANCOIS: My name is Twyla Francois, I'm head of investigations for Animals Angels Canada. Animals Angels is an internationally operating animal welfare organization with permanent inspectors in Europe, Australia, the U.S., and now Canada. Our focus is on improving conditions for farm animals.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you just slow down a touch so the recorder can keep up?

MS. FRANCOIS: Okay. We work primarily in the field inspecting livestock trucks on the highways, or visiting markets, collecting stations and slaughter houses. We closely cooperate with auction managers, transport companies, and numerous authorities such as the police, veterinarians, and CFIA. Animals Angels is a part of the world society for the protection of animals and the only animal welfare organization that is an official member of the EU Commission Advisory Group on the food chain and animal and plant health.

Animal welfare and sustainable
development: As we all know, Manitoba's hog industry is under increasing scrutiny by a public that is demanding assurances that the product they are buying was not produced inhumanely. Unfortunately, our investigations provide compelling evidence that the public's concern is well-founded and that a hog industry that polices itself, with little or no public oversight, can not ensure the welfare of animals which are often viewed as a disposable commodity.

Driven by consumer demand, farm animal welfare standards are rising throughout the developed world, as witnessed by the European Union ban on sow stalls, and more recently with Smithfield Foods, Maple Leaf and Cargill's decision to phase out the use of sow stalls as well.

If Manitoba wishes to sustain its hog industry domestically and abroad, the CEC review has an essential role to play in reviewing and recommending changes to the province's system of animal welfare oversight of the provincial slaughter houses, pig collecting facilities, livestock markets, and the intensive hog operations themselves where nearly nine million
pigs are produced each year.

Intensive farming is just not designed
with the animal's welfare in mind. By its very
nature, the focus is on doing more with less, and
unfortunately this means increasing profit through
reducing the animal's quality of life. It is also
based on a business model where decisions are made
purely to maximize profit in the short-term rather
than provide long-term benefits for animals,
society and the environment. The effect of this
on the pigs themselves is devastating, as will be
illustrated in the coming slides.

Case studies: Manitoba Pork Marketing
Cooperative and Grunthal Livestock Auction. In
2006, I conducted investigations on two of
Manitoba's pig collecting stations, Manitoba Pork
Marketing Cooperative receiving yards, or MPMC,
located at 750 Marion Street in Winnipeg, and
Grunthal Livestock Auction in Grunthal, Manitoba,
which serves as a pig collecting facility one to
two days a week.

MPMC was chosen as I had begun
receiving photos from St. Boniface residents who
were concerned with what they were seeing at the
facility. Grunthal Livestock Auction was randomly
selected, as were the days that I chose to
investigate both facilitated. I recorded numerous
violations of the Provincial Animal Care Act and
the Federal Health of Animals Act.

According to the Animal Care Act,
section 2.1,
"A person who has ownership,
possession or control of an animal
shall ensure that the animal has an
adequate source of food and water and
shall provide the animal with adequate
medical attention when the animal is
wounded or ill."

Yet I witnessed at MPMC the routine abandonment
of sick and injured pigs left with no medical
attention, food, water or straw to lie on,
although it was clear they were dying. These were
three live pigs, the one in the foreground was
seizuring. As you can see they have no substrate,
they have no food, no water, they were left there
overnight in this condition.

The Health of Animals Act part 12,
Sick, Pregnant and Unfit Animals, section 138.2
states,
"No person shall load or cause to be
loaded, and no one shall transport or
cause to be transported an animal that
by reason of infirmity, illness,
injury, fatigue or any other cause
cannot be transported without undue
suffering during the expected
journey."

And 138.2.1 further states,
"No animal can be loaded if it is
probable that the animal will give
birth during the journey."

However, at MPMC I documented a great deal of
evidence showing the transport of pregnant sows
too close to term, forcing them to give birth on
board, only to have their piglets attacked and
partially eaten by the other stressed pigs aboard.

I showed all of this evidence to CFIA
head office in Ottawa, and Gord Doonan was
particularly upset by this photo. He said it is
very, very likely this piglet was born onboard and
eaten.

This is another piglet. And what I
found concerning is that the snow has melted on
the snout of the pig, meaning it had died recently
before being thrown in the snow. More piglets at
On this day there were four garbage bags full of piglets in the back parking lot. This was probably done by a scavenger. There is two red fox and a feral colony of cats that hang around Manitoba Pork Marketing and they probably were eating this piglet. This was particularly upsetting, we've got a fetal piglet and it still has the placental sac attached and the umbilical cord. And again, the snow has melted on his nose. The Provincial Animal Care Act, Section 3.1, prohibits the infliction of suffering. "No person shall inflict upon an animal acute suffering, serious injury or harm, or extreme anxiety or distress that significantly impairs its health or well-being." Yet I recorded numerous cases of what appeared to have been still live, but dying pigs, tied up to posts outside and left to die. Many of these pigs had bleeding ligature wounds on their hind legs where the tether had been. For example, in this picture you can see the tether mark on the right rear leg and a
blood splash. And here you'll see the bleeding nose and some substance exuding. I'll explain what is the cause of that after.

This was the photo that actually got me interested in MPMC. This was sent to me and the residents were curious about what was happening here. It was plus 35 on this day.

Here again we have two tied, the one on the right is particularly distressing. This is definitely not just a jab to bleed out, it looks like it was done with a pipe.

Part 12 of the Health of Animals Act states that,

"Sick, pregnant, and unfit animals shall not be loaded or attempt to be loaded."

Yet at Grunthal we documented the attempted loading of this severely arthritic, non-ambulatory cull sow. She had been run out with the others, and her rear joints were so arthritic they were fused together so she was not able to walk. And yet they pushed her down the gally way into the round pen and there they held her. They ran three other groups through and she would have to sort of wobble to the side to get out of their way.
Eventually they decided not to load her probably because of our presence and it is illegal. They abandoned her in the full sun, it was about 35 degrees on this day. She was panting, she hadn't had water in who knows how long, and she had vomited here.

According to section 2 -- sorry, the Animal Care Act, section 3, prohibits the infliction of suffering on an animal. But we recorded numerous cases of causing undue suffering to a pig through overuse and improper use of electric prods. You'll see in the video later, but this cull sow is being electrically prodded up her vagina, and it's there for a number of seconds and then he kicks her.

According to section 2 and section 3 of the Animal Care Act,

"An animal must be provided with adequate medical attention when ill and must not have suffering inflicted upon it."

But we recorded the unloading of a still living but non-ambulatory sow by pushing her head first off the top level of a trailer to the ground below so as to cause her death by breaking her neck.
And we know this was what their purpose was because we heard the manager, I have it on tape, the manager telling the worker to do this, to break her neck.

Response from Provincial Government to violations documented: Evidence collected from these facilities, including the photos you have just seen was, provided to the office of the Chief Veterinarian, the provincial body charged with the responsibility for ensuring the welfare of farm animals in Manitoba. And while the office agreed that violations of the provincial Animal Care Act had occurred, we were shocked and disappointed to learn that the office of the Chief Veterinarian would not be referring either case to the Crown for prosecution, levying any fines, or even sending letters of reprimand to either facility or the trucking companies involved.

It is noteworthy, however, that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Federal body, provided with the same evidence, submitted three separate non-compliance reports for documented violations that fell under their jurisdiction.

This same evidence was also provided to the chief executive officer of the Ontario
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, who stated that the behaviour captured was "clearly chargeable" and that "both the Federal and Provincial Governments have equal responsibility."

It was also sent to Dr. Karen von Holleben, an accredited expert in animal handling by the European Commission, who stated the following,

"I cannot understand why the authorities don't stop such severe infringements of animal welfare causing severe pain, injuries, and unnecessary suffering to the animals."

Complaint based system: To add further concern, these violations would not have come to the attention of the authorities had we not documented them. I have been informed by the Office of the Chief Veterinarian that there had been no routine unannounced inspections of facilities where farm animals are held, such as livestock markets, collecting stations, provincially approved slaughter houses, or intensive hog operations for at least 25 years. The Office of the Chief Veterinarian is purely
reactionary, responding to complaints which, as we discovered, is no assurance that the Animal Care Act will be followed or enforced.

Conflict of interest, the connection between government and industry: The Manitoba Farm Animal Council or MFAC, is a conglomerate of agricultural industry groups in the province. It includes the Manitoba Pork Council, the Manitoba Dairy Council, et cetera. The emergency animal care line is phone line citizens are asked to call should they have welfare concerns over specific farm animals. From MFAC's website it would appear this that this line is operated by them, only with the assistance of the government. It is not clear which body is, in fact, responsible for it. It surely constitutes a conflict of interest for an industry public relations group to management concerned what should be under governmental jurisdiction. Concerned with the true confidentiality of the line, many citizens may not call, feeling it is industry controlled.

Similarly, the office of the Chief Veterinarian works with only two organizations, both of which are industry public relations groups, the above mentioned MFAC and the Manitoba
Pork Council. The interest of the animals on which the industry profits are not represented. In fact, although I have suggested that Animals Angels or any reputable animal welfare organization of the office of the Chief Veterinarian's choice, for example, the Winnipeg Humane Society, the Ontario SPCA, the Alberta SPCA, be invited to the table to represent the welfare of pigs. I was told that their office would have to check with MFAC first. Surely, a governmental body should not require approval from an industry public relations group.

The exported of Manitoba's pigs: In Manitoba, the transportation of live pigs, and even health compromised sow pigs such as sows and boars, occurs over sometimes shockingly long distances. We have recorded pigs being shipped to Mexico, Korea, California, and in 2003 exposed the trade of live pigs by truck and boat to Hawaii, a journey that takes nine days, during which time the pigs are only watered and fed every 36 hours, as per Canada's maximum time allowed before pigs must be unloaded, rested, fed and watered. Also shocking is that no matter how many hours the pigs have already been on board, when the truck
carrying them reaches the U.S. border, the clock is set back to 0 until an additional 28 hours are reached before they can be fed and watered again. As mentioned, there are many welfare concerns with cull sows and boars. The majority of these pigs are in a health compromised state, having spent their lives in gestation crates, breathing in toxic fumes, living lives of intensive confinement and severe depravation. These are the animals we most often see down or non-ambulatory due to severe arthritis, broken leg and pelvis bones, severe respiratory distress from pneumonia and heart attacks, or a lack of conditioning before being exposed to drastic temperature changes from existing in temperature controlled barns to open trailers with little or no protection from the sun and heat or rain and snow.

Most of the culled pigs from Manitoba are shipped to Iowa, Wisconsin and South Dakota. Unfortunately, there are no laws against dragging downers in any of the States we export our pigs to, meaning injured pigs are dragged with chains, pushed with bobcats, or lifted with skid steers. We saw this as recently as January of this year.
On the right is a dead sow, on the left is a
downer sow. When we brought the downer sow to the
attention of the staff, they simply pushed her
into a bobcat and drove her away from us.

This is a downer sow that we followed
from the Brandon area across the border into
Wisconsin. She was down in this position. And
she did go through the USDA inspection. And USDA
inspections take about a minute. They peer into
each hole very briefly. She was passed. She was
allowed to go through. So she travelled like this
for 20 hours. And when she got to the slaughter
house, because she was so fatigued and injured and
she couldn't get up, the worker electrically
prodded her 12 times.

Acceptance of cruel and abusive
practices: Boar bashing is a practice that
involves smashing a boar in the snout with a
baseball bat with enough force to break the snout.
This is done so boars can be transported together.
According to Federal regulations, boars must be
segregated during transport to prevent fighting,
but this is costly and inefficient. Producers
want to ship as many animals as possible in one
trailer as the cost of transportation is high, And
metal dividers take space that could be filled
with an income generating boar. So rather than
separating the boars, their noses are smashed.
The pain this causes is difficult to describe as
pigs have extremely sensitive snouts. The pain
causes the boars to become incapacitated to such a
state they will not fight. This practice is well
known by government officials but tolerated. It
is also conducted extensively. I have yet to see
a deceased boar that is not bleeding from his
snout. A great deal of evidence of boar bashing
was seen at MPMC, as illustrated here. These are
all different boars taken at different times,
different months even.

Hog barn fires: Because of a complete
lack of fire code regulations in hog barns,
thousands of pigs are burned alive in barn fires
annually. Just a few weeks ago, 3,000 sows were
burned alive trapped in their gestation crates at
Vermillion Colony Farms near Sanford, Manitoba.
Aside from the unimaginable suffering, volunteer
fire fighters are often called in to battle the
fires, risking their own lives. The number of hog
barn fires annually has been increasing
correspondingly with the growth of pig industry in
Manitoba. In 1999 there were 62 hog barn fires, but each of these fires represents the agonizing death of thousands of pigs. By failing to set fire code regulations for hog barns, the Provincial Government is complicity in this suffering.

These are photos taken at Vermillion Colony. This was two days post fire. The particularly sad thing about this photo is it's a farrowing crate, so you can see the charred remains of the sow in the middle, and she probably had 12, 15 piglets on either side. This is the charred remains of another sow. You can see her right rear hoof. And this is all of the gestation crates lined up.

Recommendations: The conditions we have documented in Manitoba are disturbingly indicative of a failure of the animal welfare system in Manitoba to protect farm animals from severe neglect and abuse. Unfortunately, the cases documented here are not uncommon. They are routine and daily occurrences. I have yet to conduct an investigation and not uncover routine abuses, cruel practices, inappropriate handling, or other violations in the pig industry.
In the case of transport, unnecessary suffering of pigs is inherent, as our legislation is weak and rarely enforced, and as mentioned before, many facilities are simply not inspected at all.

To begin with, the Provincial Animal Care Act must be updated and the language of it clarified to make practices such as boar bashing clearly illegal. There must be immediate development and enforcement of strict hog barn fire codes. A system of routine unannounced and regular audits of facilities by arm's length investigators must also be developed. The hog industry simply cannot police itself. We would not tolerate a lack of inspections of our restaurant industry. Intensive hog operations, provincial slaughter houses, livestock auctions and collecting stations require a similar program at a minimum.

And finally, there must be an increase and real deterrents and penalties for violations of the Provincial Animal Care Act. There are currently no incentives for companies to avoid incurring large numbers of fines. In fact, the fines are tax deductible and are simply claimed
back at the end of the fiscal year, implying that
violating the law is a legitimate business
expense. Other countries have a cap of three
violations per year, at which time their business
licence is suspended.

An important societal value in
Manitoba today is the protection of animals from
suffering and pain. Changes such as these are
required to reflect the values of the citizens of
our province. And I'd like to conclude with this
short video.

(Video played)
The sow on the left is still alive.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
Ms. Francois. Looking at the video at the end,
does this largely occur during the transportation
of the animals?

MS. FRANCOIS: The majority of the
problems I think -- well, I guess the focus of
Animals Angels is on improving conditions for
livestock and transport, so that is mostly what we
focus on. And a lot of these issues are related
to transport, like the boar bashing is done so
they can load them together, but I think the
handling with the electric prods, the overuse and
things like that, I think that probably begins
right from the beginning when they are born.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Before we
proceed any further, this camera, who does it
belong to?

MS. FRANCOIS: CBC.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. No problem. I
wasn't sure.

So your concern isn't really with the
on-farm treatment, it's from sort of when they are
loaded on to the trucks or as they are loaded onto
the trucks, transported?

MS. FRANCOIS: Yeah, that's Animals
Angels --

THE CHAIRMAN: And then at the
processing plant?

MS. FRANCOIS: Yes, that's Animals
Angels focus, but because of my work I do see
what's happening on farms as well and there's a
great many concerns there as well. The body
condition of these animals that we are seeing
developed over a period of time in the barn. So
the broken limbs, the weakened state, this is all
due to the intense confinement that they are
kept in.
THE CHAIRMAN: You've said that you've never gone out without finding some violations, but how widespread is it? I mean, can you tell us sort of what percentage of operators or what percentage of animals might suffer?

MS. FRANCOIS: Pigs are the worst in Manitoba. They seem to be almost singled out for abuse, especially the sows. I don't really know what the reasoning is, but if I see a sow, it's almost a guarantee that it's not well, it's going to be electrically prodded, because generally they are injured, they are weak, and the people want to load them quickly, and so they think that prodding will make them move faster.

THE CHAIRMAN: What should happen to a weak or arthritic or injured sow or hog?

MS. FRANCOIS: Well, preferably, they wouldn't get to that state. If we move to different housing systems that didn't keep them so intensely confined, I don't think we would see these problems. I've been working at Quebec the last three weeks, and what's really neat is they still have smaller farms. Here, and even talking to the producers in Quebec, they recognize that Manitoba is big pig, it's 5,000 in a barn.
But there, there's still the small farms, and we don't see the problems with the sows like we do here. Their body condition is good, their weight is good, they can walk, they are not crippled. So I think that it has to start on the farm, getting rid of these intensive systems, and that would do a lot to remedy the situation.

THE CHAIRMAN: And sort of following that premise, in a smaller operation where it's not as intensive and the pig is in a better condition, do they suffer less problems during the transportation?

MS. FRANCOIS: Definitely, definitely. We don't see a huge amount of problems with market hogs because they are young enough to tolerate it, and they have had some freedom, while they are still kept in crowded pens, they have some freedom at least.

THE CHAIRMAN: So the problems are largely with older sows?

MS. FRANCOIS: Yes, definitely, the culls, the cull boars, the cull sows. The other thing people don't recognize is that boars live their life just as intensely confined as sows do. They are kept in these crates as well. And then,
of course, recently we've been finding that they seem prone to other major problems like the detusking and the breaking of their noses.


MR. YEE: Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Francois, I gather your organization is involved in the transport, in the welfare of the animals?

MS. FRANCOIS: Um-hum.

MR. YEE: Is it more prevalent in the pork industry than it is say in the cattle industry for this type of abuse to occur?

MS. FRANCOIS: It is. It is. They seem to be treated much more so as production units. People have less patience handling them for some reason. I mean, we see problems with the others, like cull dairy cows, because they are weakened as well, and you see tail twisting and electric prodding with them too, but it really is the pigs that get it by far the worst. Just right from the beginning, they are kept so confined and, yeah, they are just in such a weakened state generally. And there is something about pigs that makes people mistreat them. I don't know what it is.
MR. YEE: I noticed you gave a couple of case histories, but in terms of your inspection activities, realizing again it's transport related, but you've mentioned you've seen the barns?

MS. FRANCOIS: Yeah.

MR. YEE: Do you also find it more prevalent just in the larger operations versus say some of the smaller hog producers?

MS. FRANCOIS: Yes, it's a huge difference. I grew up in a small farm community actually, and the majority of my friends had small mixed farms. It was so different, you know, we would walk through the pigs in their pens and they didn't squeal and run, they were habituated to people. These they are confined. If you can imagine the life of a sow, she sees another sow front of her, she has one beside her. She can't put out her legs without them being laid on. She has no human interaction. There's no conditioning, the day that they go to market, they are just stuck out into the weather no matter what the conditions are. And there's no rules on whether there should be slats in the truck or not. It just seems like it's such a haphazard industry
to me that we need some regulations, we need
something saying that this isn't good, this isn't
all right anymore. And I really think that we
need to have a ban on electric prods because they
are just too easy to use.

We went down to, it was a huge pig
slaughter plant, I think it was Triumph in the
States, and we met with the chief operating
officer who mentioned that they use no electric
prod. And it was wonderful. Even though they had
7,000 pigs in the holding pen, there was no
screaming, there was no chaos. They use large
bendable capes, or we have seen things where they
use shakers, I mean, even a detergent jug with
rocks in it is enough. We don't need to have this
hands on all the time.

If people have training in animal
behaviour, it's huge. We were just at market in
Quebec. There was major problems with it in 2002.
They adopted a no electric prod policy, and they
had three weeks of training for every worker every
year on animal handling. It was incredible. They
were able to move the animals without touching
them at all. There is a number of things we need
to do.
MR. YEE: Thank you very much.

MR. MOTHERAL: I don't think I have any questions. I grew up on a farm also. There is no real easy way to handle sickness and death, when you have your particular pet animal and you know that it's going to end up on the table, because that's the purpose, that was the purpose of raising them to begin with.

MS. FRANCOIS: But cruelty shouldn't be part of that, and we can prevent that suffering by changing the conditions they live in.

MR. MOTHERAL: That is fine. Cruelty is a matter -- it can be misinterpreted too sometimes, in my own case. But I just wanted to let you know that I am certainly aware of what goes on. I grew up on a farm, so thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just on the issue of these older culled animals and those that have physical problems, physical or health problems, taking aside, or leaving aside your premise that they should be better treated and shouldn't arrive there in the first place. But if they do, would you rather see that they be euthanised rather than euthanised and then just composted or something?

MS. FRANCOIS: Yes, that's what we
encourage actually. And that's the big problem, well, one, it would be much better if these cull animals didn't have to go 20 hours. It seems silly that our market hogs are just going to Brandon, but our weakened hogs are going 20 hours. What we already encourage is if an animal arrives down, and the CFIA made this law here, but if an animal arrives down that they just should not be dragged. Like these are animals with broken limbs, broken pelvises, and they are dragged with chains. This just isn't acceptable.

THE CHAIRMAN: And they are still alive?

MS. FRANCOIS: They are still alive, yes. They are picked up with any means possible, which is sort of unfathomable. Every facility should have a pistol or gun and should shoot the animal on board to save them the suffering of having to be dragged.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very much, Ms. Francois.

Now, have either Hilary Versavel or Curtis Ewacha arrived?

CURTIS EWACHA, having been sworn, presented as follows;
THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, sir.

MR. EWACHA: I would like to thank CEC for allowing me to make this presentation. My name is Curtis Ewacha and I farm along with my brother Terry, and my parents, Alex and Violet, in Middleboro, in the extreme southeast corner of the RM of Piney. We farm approximately 1,800 acres consisting mainly of forage production and cereal grains.

In my opinion, the Manitoba hog industry has two huge environmental issues facing it which is their responsibility to improve. The environmental problems can be traced back to the simple fact that the Manitoba hog industry has expanded too rapidly and does not have any type of contingency plan in place.

The Manitoba Pork Council is constantly doing damage control by telling Manitobans that this industry is fine, look at the wonderful benefits we bring to the province. I for one do not believe them and feel this industry poses a serious environmental problem for the Province of Manitoba, and in particular Lake Winnipeg.

The Manitoba hog industry and Manitoba
Pork Council are in great disbelief that the Province of Manitoba would place a moratorium on new barn applications until an environmental review is completed. The underlying problem is the current manure management rules for Manitoba hog industry is based on nitrogen and not phosphorus. The Manitoba hog industry has expanded from 1.5 million hogs in the early 1990s to over nine million produced in 2006.

The problem begins with the hog itself, as it does not effectively convert the high fortified diet of phosphorus, resulting in the majority of the phosphorus coming out the back end. The Manitoba hog industry has known this all along but did nothing on its own accord to provide a solution to the problem of overapplication of phosphorus which was occurring on many of the hog operations.

Even with the new regulation which allows hog operations twice the crop phosphorus removal rate, only 69 per cent of the 851 hog operations that registered have enough spread fields. Only 57 per cent of the 851 hog operations would have adequate spread fields based on one time crop phosphorus removal rate. When I
apply my commercial fertilizer to my fields, I do not double the phosphorus level, so why the regulations allowing hog operations to continue to overapply phosphorus? The new regulations for phosphorus does not go far enough if the province wants to do what's necessary to cure Lake Winnipeg.

The greatest expansion of the industrial hog barns has taken place in southeast Manitoban in the RMs of Hanover and La Broquerie. And this is where the most severe problem of overapplication of phosphorus is occurring, along with the largest deficiencies of spread fields. Soil scientists have stated this time and time again.

I travel through the RM of La Broquerie in highway number 12 from spring to fall weekly and witnessed first hand the hog expansion which has taken place in this RM and it is incomprehensible.

Manitoba's Water Protection Handbook states that most recharge in aquifers occurs in areas where sand and gravel is at the surface. Industrial barns have been built on quarters that have rock piles the size of houses consistently
throughout the quarter, literally within a couple hundred feet of each other. There are also barns that are built within a quarter mile of a gravel quarry. I would strongly suggest the CEC panel take a drive 20 miles southeast of Steinbach on highway 12 and get a firsthand view for yourself.

To make matters worse, the hog manure is broadcasted on the last and is not injected into the soil because of the vast amount of stones and spread fields being in hay and pasture.

Andrew Dickson, general manager of Manitoba Pork Council, stated in a July 21st, 2005 letter to the Manitoba Cooperator, injection of fertilizer directly in the soil presents manure from running off fields and is recommended practice. I can only wonder how much runoff of liquid manure has occurred in this form of application.

Mr. Dickson, also featured in April 19, 2007, of the Manitoba Cooperator where he tried to dispel myths about the hog industry. He mentions that hogs in Manitoba produce 29,840 tonnes of manure. He went on to say that 426,000 hectares are required to spread the manure based on manure management rules for nitrogen. It
is very convenient on his part to equate the
amount of acres required to spread the manure
using nitrogen rather than using manure management
rules based on one time crop phosphorus removal
rate. For Mr. Dickson and the Manitoba Pork
Council, to feel vindicated by the province for
placing a moratorium on industrial barn
applications should not come as a surprise
especially with respect to phosphorus overload.
When Mr. Dickson was employed by Manitoba
Agriculture, he was a member of many technical
reviews for southeast region, and was present at a
technical review public hearing for a hog
operation in the RM of Piney in September of 2003.
When the hearing was open to public questions, I
specifically asked him if the Province of Manitoba
was going to change the manure management rules to
phosphorus from nitrogen. He stated the province
is fully aware of the phosphorus situation,
admitted something must be done. So now for
Mr. Dickson, the general manager of the Manitoba
Pork Council, to complain the province has
unfairly singled out the hog industry is nothing
short of hypocritical. The Manitoba hog industry
has to stop pointing fingers and accept the fact
they expanded far too quickly in southeastern
Manitoba.

The regulation which allows hog
operations with fewer than 300 animal units to
winter spread manure until 2013 must be changed.
With all the claims by the Pork Council of the
benefit of hog manure as a fertilizer, why would
someone spread manure on snow and frozen ground?
In all my years of farming, I have yet to see or
hear of a grain farmer spreading commercial
fertilizer on the snow. Truly, what benefit can
this be providing to any crop when it runs off
with spring melt?

Another issue which I feel should be
of concern to all Manitobans is a breaching of the
lagoons and holding tanks storing liquid manure.
In the past few years there have been four major
spills of liquid manure and these are only the
ones that the public has heard about. There are
many issues to be concerned about when incidents
like this happen, such as runoff, seepage, and
well water contamination.

I contacted Manitoba Conservation who
advised me that they have five field offices with
a total of 17 full-time environmental inspectors
responsible for all livestock within Manitoba.

There are over a thousand hog operations in the province alone. The number of inspectors seems to be stretched a bit thin when they are responsible for ensuring manure management regulations are being followed with regards to all spread fields.

We are all aware that 43 per cent of the hog operations are deficient in spread fields using the one time crop removal rate for phosphorus. The CEC must address this issue with the province, the Provincial Government, and insist more environmental inspectors are hired.

The other environment issue we should be concerned with amount of fresh water large hog operations are consuming. The fact that all livestock requires fresh clean water to grow and exist is not a problem with me. The process that upsets me is the wash water these hog operations consume on a daily basis. There were nine million hogs produced in Manitoba in 2006. The average hog uses seven litres per day. Of the seven litres, one litre is used for wash water. The Manitoban Pork Council stated on July 1, 2007 there were three million hogs in Manitoba. That means anywhere from 2.5 to three million litres of
fresh water is being used just to flush the barns each day. I feel that this amount is a total waste of fresh water when we all know how valuable a commodity it is becoming. In April 2001 edition of the National Geographic, it stated that only 2.5 per cent of the earth's total water is fresh water and that only .6 is usable.

The 2006 annual report of General Electric, the single largest private employer in the U.S., stated 1.1 billion people lack access to adequate water supply, yet here in Manitoba we use 912 billion to 1 trillion litres a year to flush out hog barns. The Manitoba hog industry has shown that the only thing that matters is their bottom line, and cleaning their barns with fresh water is the cheapest method.

We in Manitoba already suffer from shortages of fresh water, as the RM of Morris applied to the Department of Conservation under the Environmental Act to have fresh water piped from an aquifer within the RM of Piney to the RM of Morris. This application was only recently rejected by the Conservation Department. The RM of Morris probably needed the fresh water to flush their barns.
To avoid some of the problems with fresh water being used to flush barns, there should have been more straw based barns built during the expansion years, but we all know that they are more management intense. With all the liquid manure being produced and the sheer size of some of these hog operations, maybe they should have their own sewage treatment plants, especially when so many of them are within close proximity of each other.

With the increased level of phosphorus being detected in Lake Winnipeg, we have to wonder if there is a direct correlation with the increased number of hogs being produced in Manitoba, from 175 million in the early '90s to nine million produced in 2006.

This is something the CEC must take into consideration. If it is determined that agriculture's share of phosphorous being contributed to Lake Winnipeg has increased, it would be safe to assume that the hog industry is the reason why. The amount of seeded acres in Manitoba has not increased. With most farmers using zero till, it's a known fact that erosion has decreased, so that certainly would reduce
phosphorus runoff. We all know for a fact that with the increased price of commercial fertilizer, grain farmers are certainly not overapplying phosphorus.

I do not believe the recent amendment to the regulations pertaining to phosphorous for the hog industry is stringent enough. The Manitoba hog industry must be held accountable. The CEC has been given the authority to make recommendations to the Provincial Government, and they must insist changes be made for the betterment of Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ewacha. Don't run away, we may have one or two questions for you.

You noted the top of your second page that manure couldn't be injected because of the vast amount of stones. How common is that in your area?

MR. EWACHA: It's very common in that stretch where the majority of the barns are built in the approximately 20 miles southeast of Steinbach on number 12, very prominent.

THE CHAIRMAN: So the manure is not
injected?

MR. EWACHA: I've always seen it
broadcast, and like I say, I farm and I go down
there enough, and I've always seen it being
broadcast.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it incorporated
within a short time?

MR. EWACHA: Well, if it's spread on
pasture fields, pasture and hay, there's no
incorporation.


MR. YEE: Yes. Just for
clarification, I guess the only question that I
have, Mr. Ewacha, is your estimation of the fresh
water use. Is that an extrapolation based on the
assumption of one litre is used for wash water?

MR. EWACHA: I phoned Ian, I don't
know what his last name is, in swine, in
agriculture -- Department of Manitoba Agriculture,
and he's, I think, their swine specialist. And I
asked him, I read that in several places the
average hog uses seven litres, and I asked him
specifically how much of that seven litres would
be used for wash water? And he explained that in
most cases six litres would be for drinking and
one litre would be for wash. And I asked him, is that safe for me to say something like that? And he said yes.

MR. YEE: Thank you.

MR. MOTHERAL: Thank you. Mr. Ewacha, you made one statement here that you said we are all aware that 43 per cent of hog operations are deficient in spread field use, because using the one time crop removal rate of phosphorus. Do you mean in all of Manitoba?

MR. EWACHA: Of the 851 they registered back in the fall.

MR. MOTHERAL: Of the -- I'm sorry?

MR. EWACHA: I guess the test was done with 851 operations, and they stated that 57 of them have adequate spread fields, 57 per cent of that 851 have adequate spread fields using one time phosphorus level rates for intake.

MR. MOTHERAL: The reason why I question this, I mean, in several areas in western Manitoba we find out there's very low phosphorus down there and they don't have any problems at all with spread fields with phosphorus. And I'm just wondering if you meant in the intensive area in southeastern Manitoba?
MR. EWACHA: It just said, it didn't specifically say where the barns were in what part of the province, it just said 851, from what I read.

MR. MOTHERAL: I think that's about all I had in this, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Ewacha.

MR. EWACHA: Thank you all for your time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now, one last chance, is Hilary Versavel here? Okay. We'll take a break for about 15 minutes. We'll reconvene about five to 3:00 with the environmental, the collective of environmental groups, and following that, the Manitoba Pork Council.

(PROCEEDINGS RECESS AT 2:45 P.M. AND RECONVENED AT 3:00 P.M.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Could I ask you to take your seats, please? I think there is a chance we may be out of here on time.

Both of you have previously taken the oath to tell the truth, so I would ask you to introduce yourselves, just for the benefit of the audience, and then proceed with your presentation.
GLEN KOROLUK, previously sworn, presented as follows:

MR. KOROLUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My name is Glen Koroluk, I'm a community organizer for the Beyond Factory Farming coalition. We are a national organization of about 40 member groups across the country and we have got four part-time staff people located throughout the country and we work on factory farm issues.

I thank you for your endurance in the meetings we have had over the last two months, and I just want to say that this is just starting the process. There is a lot more work to do from here on in.

And where do we go from here? The Clean Environment Commission has the duty and powers to investigate the environmental sustainability of hog production in Manitoba. This investigation is to integrate economic, human health and social factors into the analysis, and include these factors in the recommendations report for the Minister of Conservation.

Our understanding is that a scientific report will be released in June, and the public
will have the opportunity to provide feedback on it. We would like some clarification on this stage of investigation and ask that the CEC panel provide adequate time for our feedback, and re-open the participant funding assistance to help us engage in this process.

We wish to remind the panel that a number of principles must be adhered to for the duration of the investigation. Firstly, citizens must have rights to access to information. This same right must be utilized by the Clean Environment Commission. Without information, an informed decision cannot be made. A number of information requests have been made over the course of the half year through various public channels. We have not seen any of this data. We feel a determination of the sustainability of the hog industry cannot be made until the actual data is collected and analyzed and made available to the public.

To remind the Commission, the information we require for this Hog Production Industry Review includes manure management plans, to see if producers are following the proper rules and guidelines for manure application; soil test
data, to see if nutrients and especially phosphorous is building up in the soil; water quality data from wells that are monitoring earthen manure storage facilities, to see if groundwater is being contaminated; source drinking water quality for pigs, to see if the source, the water source nearby the ILO is contaminated; actual water usage data, to see if individual and cumulative operations are overexploiting a local water source and see how many producers are extracting water without a license; an update of the nutrient trend analysis to give us a more recent status of the nutrient loading problem in Lake Winnipeg; a list of ingredients in the feed so that we could start to monitor other pollutants such as antibiotics that enter our environment; a list of deconditioned ILOs so that we can rehabilitate these sites and assign responsibility for cleanup costs; inspection records of ILOs so that we can truly determine the hog industry performance and their impact on the environment; a complete list of all ILOs currently in an operation so that we know their location for enforcement, monitoring and inspection purposes; a breakdown of the business ownership structure, so
that we can tailor public support programs to meet the needs of the family farm operation; business risk management payout programs so we can gauge how much the public is already supporting the industry; loans and lines of credit which are forgiven and outstanding so that we can gauge how much exposure the public has in the industry; records of complaints to the Farm Practices Protection Board to determine the usefulness of this board and the effectiveness of the legislation and to see if complaints were satisfactorily dealt with; copies of all relevant in-house and external studies which Manitoba Conservation reference in the report to determine whether relevant community health studies are taken into consideration for setback distances and siting; and finally injury and illness rates of hog barn workers to determine the magnitude and cost to our health care system.

The review process must maintain objectivity and independence. This principle must applied when hiring experts to assess the scientific information. It is extremely important that those experts hired are not the same people who supplied research to formulate our current
policies, programs, and regulations which we are currently reviewing. The experts must also be independent of any government industry, partnership, sponsorship program. The CEC's deliberation should incorporate science, and place greater emphasis on scientific studies that are peer reviewed and published in professional journals.

The remainder of this investigation must be adequately resourced, so that the technical resources, public information, and remaining consultation can be successful. If government agencies and the hog industry cannot provide information in a timely manner because of the lack of resources, then the CEC must lengthen its schedule on completing this review until all information requirements are met. The CEC has limited powers, but the ones they do have can be used effectively.

When making your recommendations, it is important that the regulatory system recognize the difference between high volume, high speed production for export, and smaller scale, more labour insensitive production for local, regional and domestic markets. Inappropriate regulations
for the scale and purpose for the operation have
been used unfairly to push smaller producers and
processors out of the market. Any publicly
supported program contemplated by a new policy
must acknowledge the distinction between ownership
structures at the producer level. A family farm
entity and family farm corporation, whereby most
of the labour, management and investment are made
by someone in the family is different from a
corporate agri business investment scheme.

While we support the polluter pay
principle, we recognize that small and medium
sized family farm operations and co-operatives are
least able to pay for the investment of capital
and additional labour needed to implement
beneficial practices, environmental farm plans,
and the transition to sustainable agriculture, in
order to provide ecological goods and services.

As a pollution prevention strategy,
making a transition to sustainable agriculture is
by far the most effective way to build community
and improve the environment. Technological fixes
will, for the most part, create other unforeseen
problems.

The Beyond Factory Farming Coalition
calls for the transition to sustainable farming and socially responsible meat production as our preferred solution. Socially responsible meat production is an integrated approach to raising animals that respects the environment, treats animals humanely, supports local communities, and is economically viable for farmers. In areas where small scale organic and socially responsible farms are common, there is a higher degree of social and cultural development, as well as more viable local businesses.

Socially responsible farming includes certified organic farming, farms under holistic management, on-farm biodiversity that integrates crops and animals, no hormone implants or injections or use of non-therapeutic antibiotics, manure production not exceeding what can be utilized by crops grown on the land, family or cooperatively owned and operated farms, and animals raised in an environment where they are able to behave naturally.

To instill confidence in our citizenry who have witnessed the erosion of democracy in their communities and who have watched the denigration of our environment, we offer the
following simple interim solutions that will help
guide us towards sustainable agriculture and
vibrant communities.

Firstly, phosphorous must be regulated
based on residual soil nutrient levels.
Application of manure is to be subject to annual
manure management plans where operations are
subject to conditional use. Soil testing must be
done by an independent accredited third party for
operations subject to a conditional use permit.
In fields where there is variability of soil
types, multiple soil tests must be taken, manure
applications must be tailored to site specific
conditions. Manure application rates must not
exceed the average requirements for the specific
crop to be grown, based on the average crop
insurance yield for the risk area the crop is to
be grown in. This must also take into account the
heat units, phosphorous, and flooding risk in each
area. We must move away from fall application of
manure to spring time applications and during the
growing season when plants take up nutrients.

Secondly, ILOs must be regulated under
the Environment Act by classifying them as a
development under the classes of development
regulation. This will ensure that the public has the opportunity to get engaged in environmental decision making through environmental assessment and that local ecological knowledge is incorporated into this process.

Thirdly, the Planning Act must be amended to enhance community decision making and public participation. This includes a citizen's right to go to court on an infraction of the Planning Act, the removal of the technical review committee and technical review process, the requirement to designate any liquid manure system to conditional use permit, having the onus of proof within the decision making clause of the act placed on the developer, allowing local decision makers to place a higher level of environmental protection through conditions of approval if they so desire, allowing for precautionary decision making and bylaw making based on potential health impacts from air emissions and manure application, and allowing for flexibility to transpire in the development of a livestock operational policy.

Fourthly, citizens must be afforded the rights to enjoyment of property. This means citizens must be given back their right to sue
factory farms for nuisance under our common law.

Fifthly, we must reinstate single desk marketing of hogs which will provide equity, economic bargaining power, and transparency to the individual farmer.

Sixthly, conflict of interest legislation for municipally elected officials must be vastly improved.

Number seven, we must acknowledge peer reviews research that shows ILOs impact human health. This means the sub therapeutic use of antibiotics and rations must be phased out, and during the phase out period, we must establish effective monitoring and surveillance programs. Setback distances and siting of ILOs must be based on community based impact studies and regulated through the Public Health Act. Air emissions such as hydrogen sulfide, ammonia and odour, must be regulated under the Environment Act. Hog barn workers must be included within the employment standards code and classified and compulsory under the Workers Compensation Act. And the resources, expertise and infrastructure must be developed to respond to a major disease outbreak and epidemic.

Number nine, sufficient public and
private resources, both human and financial, must be allocated within government to allow for increased monitoring, data collection, enforcement, research, and program review. The province must develop a comprehensive data base which identifies locations of all intensive livestock operations situated in Manitoba, type and capacity of storage facilities and spread fields used in manure management plans, and this database can include soil tests, phosphorous results, as well as water quality test results in proximity to the ILOs.

Detailed public soil surveys to complete the remaining 70 per cent of agriculture in Manitoba must be vigorously completed within the next four years. This will ensure that water quality management zones can be appropriately mapped. Comprehensive public hydrological and groundwater supply data must be completed as well as data which improves and updates the identification of groundwater pollution hazard zones. Surface water quality sampling must be more frequent, expanded to include additional sites, and must adequately capture major runoff events. Public participation and cooperation with
government in water sampling should be encouraged and a legally enforceable protocol developed. Groundwater well testing must be more frequent and include the parameter of nitrate as a subsidized test. As this data base is developed, this information must be made available to the public, updated at regular intervals, and offered in an interactive fashion through the Manitoba Government website. And water allocation permits must also be included within this data base.

And number ten, perverse subsidies which support unsustainable practices that impact our environment and health must be withdrawn and re-directed toward incentives, voluntary measures, best management practices, and development that prevents pollution.

And lastly, government education, outreach, research, and public information programs must reflect larger public good goals such as environmental and community health protection, and not be influenced by private economic interests. Thank you for your time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Koroluk.

I should have noted at the outset of these final two presentations that when we first
set up this process, we offered the opportunity on
the final day to a group of environmental NGOs,
such as at the table right now, and the Pork
Council, an opportunity to offer final argument.
So these aren't presentations in the sense that
the ones up to over the last six weeks have been.
So questions from the panel will really just be
for clarification rather than any probing issues.
I will come back at the end of the
presentation and address your concern about the
scientific reports. I don't have any specific
questions on your paper at this time. Do you have
any clarification?
MR. MOTHERAL: No, questions at all.
And thank you, I like these kind of reports, it is
a check list that we can judge some of our future
work, and I like that, I like that in simple form
like that. Thank you very much.
MR. KOROLUK: We give out gold stars
too.
THE CHAIRMAN: It helps to get
recommendations, whether or not we accept them, it
helps focus our deliberations.
FRED TAIT, previously sworn, presented as follows:
MR. TAIT: My name is Fred Tait, I'm
the chair of Hogwatch Manitoba. I'm going to reflect a little bit perhaps in this closing hour of this long venture that you have been on traveling around the province now since the 5th of March.

My journey started in the late 1990s, when the structure of the hog industry in Manitoba started to change, at a time when we had just lost single desk selling, at a time when the Hutterite brethren of Manitoba produced about 52 per cent of all of the hog production, where we had a system of price transparency, equal access to the marketplace, and equal return for a product of equal value, and a system of production that was driven by market signals. The relationship between grain prices and hog prices was always in transition, and there was periods where there was declining hog production to match the increase in grain production.

And, of course, we have moved away from all of that. And that system that was there, I don't ever remember hearing a complaint of a conflict between the neighbors and the hog producer. My own neighbour produced hogs for the first 25 years I resided where I am now. We had
no conflict. I suspect if he were to build an 8,000 unit barn across the road now that our parting days would be somewhat stressed.

I have had the opportunity not only to travel to many communities across Manitoba, but I've been in Saskatchewan, I have been in Southern Ontario, and I have been in New Brunswick talking about this issue and learning about this issue. And the learning is the important part, because it never stops, the learning process. And through this process, the learning was just reflected in those multiple points that Glen Koroluk laid out. That is what comes back from the communities that we have visited and the people we have contacted over this long, long period of time.

And the problems of this industry, on one hand they are denied, on the other hand they are obvious. The economic stability of the industry now I think is very much in jeopardy. Because we established an industry on a couple of premises that would be difficult, in my mind at that time, to make business decisions upon. The one was that the American dollar would always stay at the differential it was then, which gave us a competitive advantage. That is a very, very weak
system of risk management.
The other was that because of the loss of the Crow in the '80s, farmers in Manitoba would continue in their enthusiasm to produce a supply of feed grain for the industry below the cost of production. That was the premise that we built the industry on.

The consequences of that, of course, that decision are now coming back to haunt us. The American dollar is extremely unstable. We have seen about a five cent shift in the last several weeks. And economic musing that I tend to read and follow are talking about a par, which would be devastating.

The other thing that is obvious, but yet is difficult to find, and that is I work -- my interest is in the economics of agriculture and the market power of different players in it. And so economists or researchers that I work with like Darryl Coleman, from the National Farmers Union, whose work is internationally recognized now, just a lay person, John Keene out of Saskatchewan, Professor Joe Delaquis, Earl Black, and others, have been searching diligently to try and find how much public support it takes at this time to
support this industry. And it is so well hidden you can not determine it. I was hoping to have that by this stage. So there is an area that yet has to be determined before we get a true picture.

But there are indicators, and the most recent, second most recent issue of the Manitoba Cooperator again describes the pork industry demands a competitiveness action where it basically declares that it is in financial trouble. It calls for urgent reforms by eliminating certification and inspection fees, meaning that we will provide them as a public service. To only that section of agriculture I may ask? Cheaper and more available swine vaccines at the time when the alarm about the incidences of antibiotic resistances are growing and the evidence is mounting. An incentive to produce ethanol from plant cellulose rather than grain, at a time when the ethanol plant in Minnedosa is well advanced in construction, and will we really be changing it down and changing it over to the cellulose production system? I doubt that.

Regionalizing in Canada to trace the control of livestock movements. There is some
merit to that in all livestock I suspect.

Insurance against financial loss from livestock diseases. For which industry and for what purposes, and who covers the premiums? The more you concentrate an industry, the greater the possibility of a catastrophic disease outbreak. A five year, 30 million pork export promotion program. A trade action against the United States over the issue of country of origin labeling are just a few of the things.

I saw in my time, in looking at this industry, that pressure came from within industry to move the threshold, the cap for farm support to $3 million from where it was before. And what that did, of course, is dilute what was available at the wider level, if more goes to the top.

And so we now end this process, or come close to ending this process, and I will have to tell you that as a strategy I made a very deliberate attempt that we should not clog these meetings with repetitive presentations. And I did not want to get into an issue where it would be a numbers game as to whose side had the most out. Because sustainability and environmental protection is not about numbers, and it is not
about who can assemble the greatest crowd, and it
is not about who has the greatest wealth to
participate at the highest level in the process,
it is about the logic of collectively trying to
come to development of a process that works for
the betterment of all.

And you are now going to move into a
process where you are going to look at the
interviewing expertise. And Glen touched on a
concern there, and I too will share that concern
with you. I have had a lot of experience in many
areas that engage scientific expertise in the area
of plant breeders rights, in the area of RBGH, the
growth hormone that Monsanto was trying to
introduce into the dairy herd. I have also been
involved in the whole battle around the
introduction of genetically modified wheat. And
I'm very aware of the presence of Monsanto on the
grounds of the University of Manitoba. And I have
witnessed the silencing of Dr. Sid Sherp, Margaret
Hayward, and other people who spoke out against
the interest of corporate North America.

So there is a caution here. And my
cautions is that when you look at the appendix that
is in this document, that appendix shows some
interesting things. It shows that the University of Manitoba received $2 million, or 61 per cent of ARDA research funding to the hog industry. The website, the ARDA website show that 59 per cent of the total funding went to the University of Manitoba 2005/2006. The integration today, the lines are clouded of the university, the academic community, the government and the industry. It creates problems in the public confidence. And the indirect financial interest does not inspire any further confidence. Almost all of the RD funded studies are published in-house and normally do not go through the normal academic review process. And there is no declaration of the competitive financial interest that may exist.

I await your report with some anticipation, because a lot about the future of where I live and the people I have got to know over the last nine years depends -- will be impacted by the results of this report. I know that, from past experience, that there will be some change. It would be foolish to imagine that you would go through this process and learn all of this material and the status quo would be maintained. So I know when that change comes
there will be a very concerted campaign across Manitoba by the Manitoba Cattle Producers, Manitoba Pork Council, the Keystone Agricultural Producers. With a joint check-off capacity of $6 million roughly, they can certainly run effective campaigns.

I still languish in the afterglow of their latest joint effort in 2006, that was a campaign in opposition to the establishment of the Water Protection Act in the nutrient management zones. It was somewhat disturbing to see that this campaign was able to convince many of my neighbors that their very viability was in jeopardy if these very modest proposals, that were more political than functional, came into being. Because on my own farm it is impossible for me to do a phosphorous loading without going out and purchasing huge volumes of input beyond the need of the crops I grow on my farm. So economics prevents me from doing that, as it prevents all farmers from doing that. The campaign, though, was effective in mounting public opposition that was to protect those operations that were capable of creating those nutrient loadings.

I was further amused by the contention
that the mapping that was being used was inaccurate, and I live in an area that it is totally accurate. It is so accurate that it boggles my mind how it was done. After occupying the same farm as I have for some 40 odd years, one becomes intimately familiar with the soil of that place. And I was further disturbed when I knew the history of what we call the Alamsippi sands; the wet sands area west of Portage la Prairie are extremely vulnerable to contamination of groundwater due to the porous nature of the soil and the high level of the aquifer, which on my farm very seldom ever goes below two metres from the surface. To find that the changes that had been brought forward under the nutrient management regulation and the Water Protection Act had moved my farm from one of the highest risks in Manitoba to an area of the lowest risk, one can only marvel at such magic. And one can only say, was the issue here really about protecting the environment?

And my experience, in listening to people I've met, you had one of them before the Commission, Ted Ross, talked about a municipality that was designated as 70 per cent environmentally
sensitive, and after it was adjusted through the
planning process was down to less than five.

I will close by this observation, and
it was actually made to me, it is not of my origin
but of talking to another person who observed this
process. And they said, you know, the people of
rural Manitoba may not always be of the highest
academic levels, many of us didn't go far in
school, myself included when I had to quit at 16
to take over the family farm. But they said, they
have a collective understanding and a collective
knowledge that they can apply to make this a
better place. And I believe that.

And this is where this issue became so
volatile. In all of my lifetime, things have been
done to us. Decisions were made some place else,
by forces we didn't understand or have any contact
with, whether it be trade agreements or whatever,
or corporate merger. But suddenly an issue came
where we could see it, we could smell it, we knew
who owned it, and we knew what it was there for.
It was there not to help us, it was there to
extract a profit from the area we occupy. And we
have little left out of that old community
structure, but we still had some water and we
still had some air, and we were determined that
nobody was going to take that from us.
So people activated, as people should,
and I was encouraged more than I have been in 40
years of watching farm communities destruct.
People took the task on, got elected to municipal
government, said this is our place, we draw the
line here. But it was predictable from my
knowledge of looking at other jurisdictions that
that line would soon be erased by changes to the
Planning Act. And it happened, so we lost our
control, and we wait now for the determination
from this process to see if we regain some of what
we lost, particularly hope. Thank you.
THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much
Mr. Tait. Glen, in almost at the opening of your
comments you noted that we will have, you referred
to it as a scientific report, I suspect it may be
a number of different ones, but I'm not sure how
it will be released to us, or delivered to us.
And we have, and I have said on a number of
occasions throughout the last couple of months,
that we will give a reasonable amount of time for
parties to respond to it. What would you consider
a reasonable amount of time?
MR. KOROLUK: Ten years, 13 and a half. I can't answer that. This is coming through the middle of the summer. You have to respect our working schedules in this part of the world.

THE CHAIRMAN: I mean, six days would not be reasonable. Would two months be reasonable?

MR. KOROLUK: Two months would be more reasonable than six days.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And at this time I can't commit that the participant assistance fund would be reopened, but I can't say that it will not either, so I will consider that. In my closing comments I have a little bit more explanation of where we go after today. So thank you very much. Do either of you have any clarification questions? Thank you very much for your presentations today.

Can I ask the Pork Council to take the hot seat?

Now, I believe that all four of you were on the panel at the outset and you have all taken the oath to tell us only the truth. So just for the sake of the audience, would you please
introduce yourselves?

TRACEY BRYSKA, KARL KYNOCH, ANDREW DICKSON, PETER MAH, previously sworn, presented as follows:

MS. BRYSKA: I am Tracey Bryska, manager of Public Affairs and Marketing for the Pork Council.

MR. KYNOCH: I'm Karl Kynoch, Chairman of Manitoba Pork Council.

MR. DICKSON: I am Andrew Dickson, I am the general manager of Manitoba Pork Council.

MR. MAH: My name is Peter Mah. I am the Director of Community Relations and Sustainable Development for the Pork Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MR. KYNOCH: Good afternoon. First of all, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the hog industry in Manitoba. As Manitoba Pork Council, we are here today representing 1,400 hog farmers across the province.

The hog industry is an important sector for Manitoba. We contribute one billion to the Provincial economy each year and have created jobs for at least 15,000 Manitobans.

Today we would like to recap the
highlights of the presentation we made at first, at the first hearing on March 5th. We will talk about where we are heading in the future and the key points about our industry that we would like you to consider as you put your report together.

Through this review we are confident that you will find that the hog industry is environmentally friendly and good for Manitoba, unlike what some of our opponents have been saying. The hog industry is not having a negative impact on the communities, in fact, it is having just the opposite effect.

According to the province's recently released 2006 census figures, communities that have large livestock presence have actually been growing. The population count has increased in several rural municipalities in southeast Manitoba, which we know has the highest concentration of hog production in the province.

Between 2001 and 2006, Manitoba's population rose 2.6 per cent overall, but in the southeast region in the province it increased 7.6 per cent, the strongest population growth of any region. Steinbach and the RM of Hanover accounted for nearly half of the growth. The RM of Hanover
reporting a remarkable 42.9 per cent increase in population. Other areas of significant growth in hog country include Niverville, which is up 28.3 per cent, and the RM of La Broquiere which is up 26.4 per cent. These numbers dispel the myth that hog farming is negatively affecting communities in Manitoba. The bottom line is that the hog industry is helping to boost communities, not detracting from their growth.

Interestingly, areas of the province that have not been favorable to livestock production saw a decrease in population. These include the communities of Archie, down 34 per cent, Ellice, down 24 per cent, and Minto, down 14 per cent. In the RM of Archie, one farmer wanted to involve his son and expand his hog operation. He faced some negative reaction from the community that he dropped his plans altogether, and now that puts another hog farm at risk of disappearing.

Now, I would like to turn it over to Andrew Dickson, general manager of the Manitoba Pork Council, to address some of the specific areas you are addressing in your review.

MR. DICKSON: I would like to thank the Commission for allowing us this opportunity to
present information to you in your deliberations.

If you turn to page 21, I will walk our way through the presentation and parts of it will be summarized in the overheads behind me as well, and we have given you a copy of that. I will highlight some of the various parts as I go through and some of the highlights are in the overheads. And Karl's presentation is on the first part, so if you turn to page 2-1, we will work our way through this.

Essentially, the opening remarks I would like to make are, as Karl said, there are 15,000 Manitobans and their families that are dependent on the hog industry. This is an integral part of the provincial economy. We have a billion dollar impact on the provincial economy. Manitobans sell pork products into some of the most sophisticated food markets in the world. We are recognized worldwide for the quality of our products at competitive prices. This is just an outline of what the industry is about.

Now, we have attempted to try and summarize our comments on the various areas that were presented to us as the issues that came from your scoping hearings. So I'm going to walk
quickly through those and then we will turn to
recommendations that we would propose to the
Commission in terms of how to handle some of the
issues that have been raised.

One of the first ones is nutrient
management. It has become apparent that there is
this myth out there of 9 million animals, and this
has created a lot of misconceptions about the
amount of manure that is produced in the province,
the amount of water consumed and so forth, the
impacts on communities and so on.

Essentially on January 1, 2007, there
were 378,000 sows on Manitoba farms. This is the
mother herd. And at any one time we had 2.96
million head on farms, not 9 million, and of
those, 1 million of those are small pigs, less
than 20 kilograms. And more than half of these
are actually exported weighing less than
7 kilograms. And another .7 million on the farm
at any one time are between 20 and 60 kilograms.
And about a third of our production is exported at
less than 50 kilograms.

The key point is that the bulk of the
pig numbers on the farm at any one time are small
pigs which produce very little manure, especially
the isoweans.

One of the other myths that seems to be promulgated in the media is hog manure is a toxic waste. Hog manure, pig manure is simply undigested feed. It is mostly fiber, it is mixed in with some urine, mostly ammonia and urea produced by food and feed animals which are actually eaten by us as fresh product. Manure has been used for thousands of years as the primary crop fertilizer, and it is superior in promoting crop growth. And this nutrient cycle, fertilizing crops to be eaten by animals which in turn are eaten by humans has been a sustainable practice for over thousands of years.

The other one that comes up in terms of nutrient management is this issue of uncontrolled growth of the industry. And the reality is, if you look at the sow herd, the growth has been slow and gradual over the past 20 years. And we provide a graph here. If you actually look at the sow numbers, the growth is almost imperceptible. What is dramatic is that these pigs, these sows produce weanlings, and we have had a significant growth in weanling production in the 1990s, and the growth has now
tapered off and we have returned to the slow steady growth that we experienced for many decades beforehand. And if you actually look at the number of finished pigs, that growth has been modest as well.

One of the facts that we have is that there is lots of land here in Manitoba. The management of nutrients found in the manure produced by the hog industry has improved significantly over the past 20 years. If we allow for the volatilization of nitrogen during transfer and storage, the manure that we produce from the pig industry is sufficient to fertilize, based on nitrogen, about 30,000 hectares or about 6% of the crop land in Manitoba. And if you base it on the phosphorus regulations, there would be sufficient in there to fertilize 15% of the annual crop land in Manitoba. In other words, a very small percentage. We have lots of land that will have to be fertilized by artificial fertilizer.

The fact, nutrient balance, to achieve 20% of land that will have to be fertilized by artificial fertilizer.

To achieve that in the province we need to get focused on more organic fertilizers and less artificial fertilizers. If we could reduce the application of nitrogen, we could improve the nutrient balance.
of artificial fertilizer, all of the agricultural
regions in Manitoba could come into balance, both
for nitrogen and for phosphorous. We need to
encourage farmers to look at manure for their
primary source as a crop fertilizer.

And I put up here table nine, and if
you look at region nine, which is the so-called
hog country, if we could reduce the artificial
fertilizer applied we could even bring this region
into balance in terms of crop removal. It is a
fact that technology can provide solutions. There
are a host of feeding technologies and manure
treatment systems that are being used to reduce
the levels of nitrogen and phosphorous in manure.
These include the reduction of dietary protein,
using free amino acids, increasing the dietary
energy content, using non-starch
polysaccharides -- reducing them, sorry -- phase
feeding, using manure covers, using phytase
enzymes and rations, using sodium rather calcium
phosphate, and continually improving the genetic
selection for feed conversion which is one of the
core factors. And I provide some more information
about how we do that.

In terms of manure management, manure
is highly regulated. I mean, the Manitoba Government has got almost 13 years of experience now in regulating the application of livestock manure on farmland. And they have built up considerable expertise on ensuring manure is managed sustainably and the environment is well protected. And these regulations have been amended every five years or so to provide greater clarification in different situations or deal with new concerns such as the level of phosphorous.

The main objective of the regulatory staff has been to achieve compliance, and as we showed in our earlier presentation, the level of compliance has actually been improving and the numbers of infractions are dropped.

Another message that we would like to pass on is stick to the science. The current regulatory framework is working reasonably well. New standards were brought in, in November 2006, dealing with phosphorous by Manitoba Conservation. These were based on the recommendations of an expert committee appointed by the Minister of Conservation, and it is critical that the government continue the approach of using science to base its regulations.
As an aside, we would also like to indicate that the impact on small producers in the Red River Valley by these new regulations by banning winter spreading has not been properly addressed at this time, in our estimation.

THE CHAIRMAN: What do you mean by that, Mr. Kynoch?

MR. KYNOCH: Well, at the time we asked that -- the smaller producers were going to have to build extra storage capacity so they don't have to spread their manure. And we were told that there was going to be a financial package available to the smaller producers to help them adapt. And so far from what we can see, there has been a green loan program being announced by the province, essentially offering these farmers a loan. And there is some talk about going and getting some funding out of the agricultural policy framework in terms of best management practices and so on. But the farmer has to put money up front to access any of those grants.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. KYNOCH: And what we were saying at the time is we wanted to see a package developed specifically for that designated region,
and so far we haven't seen that. Hopefully, it will come. So then probably as a result of your Commission's hearings, we might hear that.

The collection, the other point that we want to make here clearly is the collection, storage and application of manure to land is highly regulated at each stage during the year, detailed records are kept by producers, there is actual field audits, there is inspections carried out by government staff, and even the construction of the facilities is supervised by third party professional engineers. And these in turn are inspected regularly by the government for ensuring they are meeting the standards of construction.

Another fact, Manitoba is tougher on enforcement. And one of the unique things here in Manitoba is that conservation officers are allowed to issue tickets and common offence notices. This is unique in Canada, in fact, we are not even sure if it is available in the United States. This process allows them to deal with an issue quickly in the field and get compliance with the regulation. The alternative is to go through court orders. These are time consuming and expensive to get issued.
In terms of land use planning, and we will deal with this in more detail in Peter's presentation, but the core message that we are trying to get through here is, municipalities are trying to work their way through this. Since 1975 Manitoba has developed a comprehensive land use planning and management system at the municipal and provincial level. Local governments are expected to take responsibility for determining the most appropriate uses of land under their control.

And in terms of the response as a result of the expansion of the hog industry in the 1990s, yes, there were some bitter fights, we agree with that. But the history to date now is that the level of conflict has actually started to drop when local people become better informed about what their rights are on how the industry is actually going to work in the community. And after the barns are up and running, their attitudes tend to change.

Behind the Planning Act has been, a critical point is that local elected officials are more knowledgeable about community goals, objectives and values. They are directly
accountable for their land use decision. The province is better positioned, on the other hand, to look after the broader environmental public interest. They have the technical capacity to do that, but it is critical that we maintain this division of interest in terms of local control over land use decision making and the overriding provincial responsibility for the environmental protection.

One of the myths about the planning process, and I have no idea where it comes from. Municipalities, to this day, still retain the authority to deny a proposed hog barn development without having to provide any explanation for their decision. They can go through the conditional use hearing process, everything, and can still deny it without having to provide any reason, there is no comeback on them or anything.

Other message; the local review process does work, and the technical review process does work, as an initial review of a proposal to provide some information to a municipality in terms of determining whether it meets the general character of the land that it is zoned for. And it is done in an objective manner,
there is a huge public hearing process, local citizens have a full opportunity to review the proposal and the TRC report well in advance of any decisions by council.

Another message is, we would like to see municipalities get on with planning after the changes in the Municipal Act in 2006. We need to start moving more quickly in addressing those key objectives in that. Peter is going to talk more about this.

In terms of groundwater supply and quality, the fact is our groundwater is protected. The use of groundwater in Manitoba is highly regulated to protect both supply and quality. There are standards for well construction, permits for wells, limits on the amount of water withdrawn in critical areas, and producers are required to keep records on consumption rates. Based on the records we could obtain from Water Stewardship in terms of groundwater use, there are 215 water rights licenses that have been issued to the hog industry for access to groundwater. How much do we use? Well, I should say the smaller producers would fall in the area of not having to have permits because they use less than 25,000 litres
per day. I'm missing an L in my presentation here.

In terms of the groundwater use, we aren't causing dry wells. That is a fact. The amount of groundwater used by the hog industry is a tiny fraction of the amount we recharge annually. The annual allocation of groundwater is equivalent to the annual precipitation which would fall on three and a half sections of land, or for city people, three and a half square miles of farmland. Now, you want to compare that to the City of Winnipeg, this is equivalent to ten days of the amount of water allocated to the City of Winnipeg for its removal from Shoal Lake. It is a very small use of water.

In terms of contamination and so forth, all of the studies that we could find have indicated that the problems in terms of the impact on water quality are due to poor well construction or maintenance, or they are very close to sources of contamination close to the well. And these two core sources of contamination are leaching domestic septic fields or malfunctioning septic tanks.

In terms of surface water quality. We
recognize more than any that Lake Winnipeg is in
trouble, but we all need to do something about it.
This is the recommendation from the Lake Winnipeg
Stewardship Board. It is a complex issues and it
is going to involve all users of the landscape.
The hog industry is just one stakeholder amongst
many. Our role here is to return the soil
nutrients which were removed in the production of
livestock feed back to the ground. These plant
nutrients and the microorganisms in hog manure are
no different than those derived from other
livestock, animals, plants, the soil itself,
atmospheric fixation or artificial fertilizer.
And it is a fact that the hog industry
contributes only 1.5 per cent of the phosphorous
in Lake Winnipeg. We are a very small contributor
to the problem. However, we recognize that we
have to do something about it. The province
finally has initiated the first set of phosphorous
standards for levels in soil in November 2006.
This was less than six months ago. And we need to
get on with implementing those regulations.
Hog farmers can't carry the burden on
their own. If the Provincial Government wants to
see an increase in the pace of change, then we
need to have some significant public investments on individual farms to offset the cost of change. As an example, the new phosphorous regulations are going to cost hog producers eventually 18 to $27 million per annum in annual operating costs.

Soil quality: Basic message here is manure is good for the soil. It is exceptionally good for improving soil quality, and we provide a whole host of reasons as to why that is. I am not going to go through them here.

In terms of odours, yes, there is a problem with odours with the industry, and we are working on it. Hog producers do not want to be in conflict with their neighbors, and we have made tremendous strides in reducing the problem of nuisance odours. Some rural residents have expressed concerns about odours, but the actual number of formal complaints is very limited.

Here is a fact; the Farm Practices Protection Act was bought in, in 1994. The board has complete authority to order remedial action, and to date they have received less than four complaints of hog operations per annum. And it still doesn't take away the citizens' right to pursue an action in the courts under the Nuisance
Act. This is simply a first step process in trying to resolve the conflict, but they still retain their rights under the Nuisance Act. Odours can be significantly reduced. We have manure storage covers, we use manure injection, shelter belts, basic sanitation and cleanliness. Another good technique is appropriate separation distances as outlined in the Planning Act and the Provincial Land Use Guidelines.

In terms of disease, modern swine production poses negligible threat to human health. Segregation of swine from pets and wildlife has reduced the human/animal interface so that the potential to human health from diseases and parasites has been reduced to negligible levels. And I provide a whole host of what happens here in terms of the health and comfort of the animals, which have been dramatically improved in the last 20 years. The physical separation of animals from their manure, controlled temperatures and air movement, biosecurity protocols for staff, multi-site production in terms of breaking the disease cycle at different levels of production, vaccines, science based rations, and many others.
And in terms of the human/animal interaction, any potential threat to human health is handled by the current food inspection system. Local and provincial veterinarians are involved in all stages of the production process. There is a daily sharing of information between the Federal and Provincial Health and inspection authorities. And in addition, our industry in Manitoba has adopted the national Canadian Quality Assurance program for swine, and we use local veterinarians to ensure the producers are using strict regimes when using antibiotics.

Another fact on here is the use of antibiotics is highly regulated. The use of antimicrobial agents such as antibiotics and disinfectants is highly regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

In terms of climate change, the very simple message here is that hogs in Manitoba are insignificant. The pork industry contributes in a very small way to the causes of climate change, and it is declining because we use better manure technologies and feeding practices.

The pork sector in Manitoba contributes .077 per cent of the whole of Canada's

THE CHAIRMAN: How was that determined, or who determined it?

MR. KYNCH: The Canadian Pork Council commissioned a study on this and published that report, and they based it on national research and they just drew that out, so I drew it from that report. But I can go back and pull those out.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. KYNCH: In terms of environmental liability, in our original report we provided a detailed assessment from our lawyers on environmental liability. The key message here is that liability is complex, but there are laws in place to protect the public interest. There is a substantial body of legislation, of bylaws dealing with environmental liability. The advice that we received is that environmental liability is determined by the circumstances and parties involved in a particular situation. And we can provide more information on that, if so required.

In terms of other jurisdictions, we didn't do a very detailed review of all of the legislation and regulations in other jurisdictions. There is just so much. We want to
emphasize, though, that the Commission, when it
does -- you will have your technical team who can
do that for you. But consider the details of the
various regulations and how they are actually
enforced. There is a lot of stuff done on paper
but maybe not enforced. The devil is in the
details.

The existing legislation and
regulations in Manitoba have been developed by
government officials after extensive comparisons
with other approaches elsewhere and extensive
public consultation. And it is time to deal with
all of the rules that have been introduced. Our
feeling is that we don't need any further
regulations. It is time to get on with the job at
hand.

In terms of economic impact, as we
said earlier, there is a number of studies that
have been done on the economic impact. The core
one was done by the University of Manitoba on a
certain area of central Manitoba, they looked at
196 hog operations, these produced $267 million in
goods and services and generated $2,779 person
years of employment.

All we are saying here is, when you
are thinking of regulations and changing how we do business, think of the impact on the provincial and rural economy.

In terms of the future, world growth or demand for pork products is increasing. World production needs to increase by about 25 to 30 million hogs per year globally for the next decade to meet that demand. And in comparative terms, the total production of Canada at this time is about 30 million pigs, so world demand is increasing by the amount that Canada produces as a whole.

In terms of threats, this is a fragile industry to some extent, like any other livestock industry, and we face the same issues that any other livestock sector faces in terms of the potential for constriction or diminishing of the industry could come from: Restrictive government policies, unforeseen animal diseases, shortage of investment capital, lack of competitively priced grains, exchange rate fluctuations, or restrictive U.S. border tariffs or regulations.

Our core message here is any growth in the future will be modest, as we showed earlier in our graphs. We figure maybe a modest growth rate
of 1 or 2 per cent per annum.

Some people asked, what is a reasonable number? And we feel that is an exercise in futility. The role of government is to provide the rules of conduct for individual entrepreneurs in the economy. The availability of capital, land, labour, profits, regulations, these will all determine whether the industry grows or shrinks.

In terms of an innovative industry, we take pride in being proactive in emerging environmental issues. Unfortunately, for us right now, this pause has created a negative atmosphere and individual producers are very reluctant to make any further investments at this time, until this matter is resolved.

In terms of the role of government, core message here is, please, use other policy tools. We have had enough with regulations, let's get on with what was been done. We still have yet to realize the impact of the existing regulations up to even November of 2006. There are a host of other policy tools that can be used, research funds, tax incentives, public assistance, education, general guidelines, conflict resolution
mechanisms, more organic farming in terms of recycling plant nutrient from manure, grants for reducing nuisance odours from existing operations using new technologies and so on.

The message is that the hog industry in Manitoba is heavily regulated. Successive Provincial Governments have created one of the strictest sets of environmental regulations for the livestock industry in North America.

The hog industry is ideal for Manitoba. It is a slow but steady growth industry. We need to finish more of the existing weanling crop, and there is all kinds of reasons why. And in terms of expansion, to put some perspective here, Manitoba in 2006, we may have built 12 barns. In Iowa they built 290 barns in the same year. So this is not dramatic growth or anything by any stretch of the imagination.

Now, if we could finish more of the weanlings, we could provide a domestic market for the grain and oil seed industry, we could reduce our dependence on synthetic and imported mineral fertilizers, we could reduce the threat of trade action, we could improve the stability of our meat processing industry, and we can add value to raw
grains and oilseeds.

And a final message, Manitoba has a world class industry which can deliver final product into some of the most discriminating markets in the world. We should be proud of this achievement and encourage the industry to grow and develop for the benefit of all Manitobans.

I'm going to turn it over to Peter Mah to provide sort of a looking forward piece and some conclusions and recommendations.

MR. MAH: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, fellow Commissioners. It is my task to sort of bring home some conclusions and recommendations from this two month process, public process, 17 public meetings in 15 local areas throughout agri Manitoba.

First of all, we want to say that we as the Pork Council recognize that the Clean Environment Commission, the public review process has been very beneficial, certainly in bringing forward a whole range of views from the public about our farms, about the environmental sustainability of our hog production industry in Manitoba. But there is two key observations that we have noticed throughout the whole two month
process.

The first is, while protection of our precious natural environment is a concern to all persons, the environmental sustainability of the hog production in Manitoba is not, in our view, a significant issue for most Manitobans. And we cite really through the course of the meetings that somewhere in the order of about 150 verbal and formal written submissions to date have been received, not a great amount. Mind you, at the same time, we also note that the number of people who actually attended the meetings, and there were many time slots that were actually open to the Commission where people who had the opportunity, who were very, very concerned, to come forward and speak their mind, to give you suggestions. They did not appear. And of the people who did appear, about 90 per cent, in our view, were in favour of the industry, and felt very strongly that they were doing the most that they can do to protect the environment. So our conclusion is, as I have said before, that it is not a significant issue for most Manitobans relative to the environmental sustainability of this hog industry.

We believe as well that most
Manitobans have confidence in government to monitor and enforce environmental regulations in the public interest, unlike some people who we believe are cynical of government and look at every opportunity to rail against establishments, certain processes, certain laws and regulations.

Our second observation is that there is a relatively small number, but determined group in their own right, these citizens who are very passionate about an anti-hog industry. I take nothing away from them, they are very passionate, but they are a very small group. Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, I have to tell you that they are the ones in the news, they are the ones at the CEC public meetings, and they are the ones who are here today. They have relied heavily on emotional debate. They have used anecdotal, connect the dots cause and effect hypothesis to argue the need for crisis regulatory intervention, crisis regulatory intervention.

And it is particularly noted that little in the way of very factual or documentary evidence sourced in Manitoba itself has been provided to substantiate the claims of gross or widespread environmental degradation by the hog
industry in Manitoba. So we ask, therefore, we ask Manitobans and we ask the Clean Environment Commission, where is the smoking gun?

Today hog farming is the most heavily regulated and publicly monitored industry in Manitoba, without a question. Yet there are relatively few formal warnings and charges for environmental offences for over 1,400 pork producers, in an industry that produces almost nine million pigs annually in Manitoba. This we believe is a testament to our producers' individual commitment to environmental farm stewardship on their farms and on the land.

And just to demonstrate, and I can give you copies of this later, I have a copy of the enforcement actions since 1998 to 2005. It indicates that in '98 there were 50 infractions and enforcement actions under the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation, which of course affects all livestock species, not just hogs, there was 50 in that year, rising to a high of 130 in year 2003. So obviously there was a need to notch up the enforcement action, the public was demanding more enforcement, and that was done. And that is concomitant to the number
of increased warnings, violations and fines.

At the same time, since 2003 to 2005, those are the latest statistics that I have here, it went down from 130 to 100 violations, a decrease of 25 per cent. In a time when in fact the public scrutiny for more enforcement was taking place, the industry, the livestock industry in general, the violations went down. Very, very significant. And that was for manure management plan violations, permits, storages, confinements, spills and mortalities, the whole range, the whole gamut of public regulation on the livestock industry.

I cite as well that the Farm Practice Protection Board, again, citing 13 years of statistics established in 1994, there were 75 complaints that were received in which decisions were rendered, 75 in that period of time. Now, 58 of those were odour related. And as Andrew has indicated, yes, odour is an issue for our industry but we are addressing it. Of the 58 odours, 49 were hogs. So, Commissioners, roughly 49 -- not roughly, 49 or about 50 of the 75 were hog related. Okay. So we have some work there.

I would like to just point out that,
as we had indicated on March 5th, in terms of our
opening presentation, that we caution that public
perceptions are not a good basis for public policy
making, absolutely terrible.

Using manure application, as an
element, it has been a point of controversy mostly
because of its benefits as a tightly regulated
manure natural fertilizer is not well understood
by the general public. But soil scientists, and
agronomists and producers know that when properly
applied and recycled, manure helps to rebuild the
soil and is a valuable source of nutrients to grow
crops.

As such we believe that the CEC's
investigation review be accountable and its
findings and recommendations to be sound, it must
carefully weigh within the scope of the mandate of
the CEC hearing all of the information to be
filtered by three tests, this is a reminder, one
is relevancy, two is facts and three is good
science.

We believe that Manitoba's hog
producers, indeed the whole agriculture industry
and agri business sector which, of course, is
affected by this pause, like most Manitobans are
prepared to trust in the integrity and judgement
of the Clean Environment Commission, particularly
to decipher the factual merit of all the
submissions and to arrive at well thought out and
reasonable conclusions and recommendations.

One of the conclusions which we
believe is defensible, and we trust the CEC would
also conclude at the end of your findings that
there have been a lot of legislative and
regulatory changes adopted and initiatives taken
by government to deal with livestock and the
environment in Manitoba. It has been a big issue
in Manitoba for the last ten years, more so since
1999. In total, they would create a comprehensive
safety net, a tool box for government and a tool
box for communities, and a tool box for ordinary
citizens, to ensure that the livestock industry
grows in a sustainable way.

And these measures include the first
set of livestock regulations to regulate manure
application adopted in 1994, the Farm Practices
Protection Act, the Farm Practice Guidelines to
deal with livestock siting and odour management,
formation and operation of provincial livestock
technical review committees, the Livestock
Stewardship Review Panel report, and the public meetings, and the report submitted in December of 2000, amendments to further strengthen the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation in March of 2001, creation of the Office of Drinking Water, increased environmental monitoring and enforcement of livestock operations as a result, a further requirement for annual water source testing for livestock operations over 300 animal units. The government themselves had filed a 2005 provincial sustainability report for all of Manitoba, not just the livestock sector, but all human made activities here in Manitoba. Adoption of the Water Protection Act in January of 2006, the adoption of the Planning Act requiring mandatory local livestock policies, adopted and enforced in January of '06. There was a subsequent amendment to the Provincial Land Use Policy Regulation number 2 that, in effect, adopted minimum provincial siting standards or separation distances for livestock, and that would be from designated residences and designated urban centres, and that happened in January of '06. And of course, the government had completed its 2006 report called "Examining the
Environmental Sustainability of the Hog Industry in Manitoba," which I might point out, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, identified no significant issues, no significant issues.

We have as well mandatory registration and inspection of all manure storage facilities, mandatory. We have strengthened livestock technical review committees, mandates and resources, that just happened recently. As we know and we have already talked about the adoption of a new phosphorous regulatory amendment only recently in November of '06. And then the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board public review process, which again it was a whole public process, and they submitted the report in December of '06. And their report was called "Reducing Nutrient Loading to Lake Winnipeg and Its Watershed, Our Collective Responsibility and Commitment to Action." It noted as well that the province had already taken action on 113 of the board's 135 recognitions. Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, I ask you, where is the smoking gun?

Work in updating the Farm Practice Guidelines for hog producers in December of 2006. That has yet to be submitted for public release,
but we know the work has been done, it has been sitting on the shelf. There has as well been a public consultation period, extensively, through negotiations with consumers, public, agricultural groups, Manitoba Municipal Association, about the nutrient management regulation under the Water Protection Act. There has been an announcement of an expanded mandate for the Lake Winnipeg Water Stewardship Board made on February 14, 2007. Their role is to monitor ongoing progress and to restore the health of Lake Winnipeg and to coordinate a basin-wide watershed management plan. And, of course, we are here today over the course for the last two months before the Clean Environment Commission on your investigation of our industry.

Bottom line, taken as a whole, all Manitobans can be assured that Manitoba has a comprehensive safety net of public policy and livestock development, and environmental regulations at the Federal, Provincial and local levels and, in fact, some of the toughest measures to protect our natural environment for current and future use. A litany of whole new initiatives, a litany of acts and regulations; where is the
smoking gun? In terms of producers' financial
commitment, I have got to tell you that in spite
of all of the regulations and acts, we as an
industry have not stood back and done nothing.

Since 1999 when Manitoba Pork Council
was created as a producer board funded solely by
its members, we have invested over five and a half
million dollars towards third party, independent
research institutions in improving swine
production, protecting the environment, and in
technology transfer. This includes the University
of Manitoba's Faculty of Animal Science, the
Prairie Swine Centre, the Veterinary Infectious
Disease Organization, the Canadian Research
Network, Manitoba Manure Management Initiative,
which by the way the hog sector is the principle
funder in spite of the fact that it was supposed
to be a livestock initiative, and the Lake
Winnipeg Research Consortium, we have been funding
for over the past three to four years. This also
includes a half a million dollars of producer
funds to the University of Manitoba's National
Centre for Livestock and the Environment, and
another $850,000, ladies and gentlemen,
contributed and pledged to its Glenlea Farm
Education Centre.

What does this mean? It means that such research programs out of the pockets of producers, these programs, technology transfer and education benefits all of Manitoba and society, incurred by the hog producers of this province.

Our pig producers have also invested 14 and a half million dollars themselves to construct engineered manure storages and new manure management technologies directly on their farms since 1994. They have incurred that cost. Manitoba pig producers have also undertaken many environmental initiatives, employed many beneficial management practices that exceed current regulations.

Over the next ten years, Manitoba pig producers will spend anywhere from 18 to $28 million annually, according to a 2006 analysis by the University of Manitoba, to comply with the new phosphorous regulation, which again was adopted in November of '06. And when it is fully phased in, that will be again 18 to $28 million. In addition to which, we are on track as Manitoba Pork Council on behalf of our membership, to invest another half million dollars annually on
ongoing environmental research, tech transfer and other environmental initiatives.

I have to tell you, Manitoba pork producers are part of the solution. We are strongly committed to environmental protection on our farms and we are heavily invested in our industry, as our industry continues to be environmentally friendly and sustainable. I guess if anything else, we challenge government, we challenge other industries, environmental coalitions, and ordinary citizens to do their part as much as our 1,400 pig producers.

In terms of recommendations, I will go through this very quickly. Manitoba Pork Council, on behalf of the pig producers in the province, is prepared to continue to work with the government, industry stakeholders and Manitoba communities to meet our common goals and objectives, and to this end we offer a number of recommendations to the Clean Environment Commission in three main areas, the livestock planning and approval process, regulations monitoring and enforcement, and working in partnership.

First the livestock planning and review process. Obviously this is a
multi-jurisdictional process involving federal, provincial and local authorities. And you may find in your booklets, Commissioners, that there is in fact a table, and in that table it lists the existing legislation. And as you go through that, you can see on the left-hand side that there is, in fact -- existing legislation is four federal acts, the Health of Animals Act, the Animal Care Act, the Fisheries Act, the Species at Risk Act. Provincial is the Animal Care Act, the Animal Diseases Act, Sustainable Development Act, Environment Act and so on. You go all of the way down right to the local municipalities and planning districts with development plans and zoning bylaws. If it is not there, then we should have -- we will make it available for you.

On the right-hand side is the proposed and draft legislation which again includes the provincial nutrient management regulation, which has been proposed, there is the draft Agri Food Traceability Act. At the local municipalities there will be local livestock operations policies and, of course, new livestock zoning, and the water planning authority, the water management plans yet to come. There is in fact a litany of
new legislation.

For the farmer, I have to tell you that this is indeed formidable, it is indeed formidable.

If I have lost you, I'm sorry, if you go to page 3-7, it deals with more livestock operations policy guidance. In this particular case we note that the advent of the new Water Protection Act also indicates that local livestock operations policies must consider the water quality management zones and any water management plans prepared by water management authorities. I have to tell you that these two planning requirements, to do the livestock operations policies and consider water planning policies is of itself very confusing. It is confusing a lot of local officials who are mandated to do that. And we feel it is very important that the province should show more guidance on how to prepare these local livestock operations policies, particularly in terms of the interface between those two acts.

We feel as well that the province should encourage local planning authorities and municipal councils to adopt the updated Farm Practices Guidelines -- which have yet to come
out -- and the provincial land use policy,

livestock standards number 2, which includes local mutual separation standards between residences, designated areas and livestock.

We also feel that one of the things that municipalities can do in developing a local livestock operations policy, and if I can turn your attention to this diagram on the wall, and that is to be able to take a look at a concept where, in fact, you have -- this is not going to work -- in terms of the designated urban centres and villages, the interface between residences and livestock is always a source of conflict, farm, non-farm. So in case of residences, they would be encouraged in urban centres but, of course, no livestock would and should allowed in villages and centres. At the same time, designated rural residential areas, which are quite common now, rural residences would be encouraged, but of course no livestock would and should be allowed. That seems clear.

However, when you go to the agricultural area, that seems to be the area of contention. And in the area of a designated livestock area, the Planning Act already provides
the ability for a municipality and a community to designate areas where livestock will, in fact, be permitted. The fact that it has not, first of all, is basically a missing point. I think there has been so much controversy and so much reliance upon conditional use process, which has some merit but which can be improved, this would in fact allow a municipality and a community to designate those areas which are best suited for livestock, from a resource point of view, from a land use point of view, from an infrastructural point of view and transportation point of view. In those areas, the livestock, in fact, based upon appropriate siting requirements, mutual separation distances, and conditions of approval, and that would be spelled out in the local livestock operations policies, that in fact livestock should be permitted in those areas, with the proviso that residences should not be allowed in those areas. Because when you get that proximity, that is where you get the conflict.

At the same time, in a general agricultural area, which is the bottom one, you would have perhaps an area where there is already some mixed land uses, and in those instances it
would be appropriate to retain the conditional use process where, in fact, the local compatibility, land use compatibility can be weighed.

And that, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, is one opportunity by which local municipalities and the province can move ahead.

The conditional use process is very fractional, it is very confrontational, and I think a little bit more clarity, a little bit more precision will bring this home.

Let me go to improving the technical review team process. The process itself is a valuable process, it provides a lot of expertise to both municipalities and the province. This is under page 39. To improve the process, however, we feel that more provincial staff should be assigned to the technical review team process. We feel that a one to two month period to complete a TRC report is appropriate to do the necessary site visits and do all of the analysis. A six month period is totally unreasonable. And we feel as well, with more staff assigned to the TRC process that, in fact, it would allow staff to go out to the conditional use meetings, where they may occur, to defend their report and answer questions
and clarify for the public and for council. So this would all come forward and, in fact, what it would do, it would bring a lot of precision, a lot of clarity and a lot of confidence to this whole process.

Okay. I have already talked about the new regulations and processes to be implemented, and we are now going to move forward to, on page 313, considering the impact of CEC recommendations.

We think, we believe that the CEC should look at the impact of your recommendations about more regulations, or potential for more regulations. Numerous rules and regulations under which hog farmers and other livestock producers must meet to gain initial approval and to continue to operate already have serious implications for the future of livestock food production. As more and more regulations and resultant costs are added, they threaten the viability of farm operations with the potential to either drive existing producers off the land or to discourage young farmers from becoming livestock producers. And I have already gone through and just shown you that in fact there is a long list of regulations.
There is also a need to consider the impact of trying to regulate the production model and scale of production. I have heard here today and at some of the other meetings that they are advocating that government should say we should move towards a straw-based system. Well, Manitoba's hog industry is characterized by both small scale farm families and larger more specialized producer companies. Both scales of production have their own unique merits and challenges.

In the case of small scale farm family pork producers, they have typically diversified their farms with hog production but have limited ability to bring on outside labour, substantive new investment capital and apply new technology. Instead they utilize beneficial management practices that are appropriate and best suited to their own farm operation.

On the other hand, larger scale pig producers in Manitoba are typically either more specialized producer companies, or those that are communally owned and operated by Hutterite colonies. They are more able to employ or retain specialist advice in nutrient management,
financial and marketing analysis, and are better able to invest and apply the latest technologies and innovations in their operations.

Manitoba's pig industry has evolved over time, and the pig producers should be able to choose the operational scale and model production that best fits the needs of the farmer, the marketplace, and farm location. The farmers' right to choose between a modern conventional farm versus straw based system must be maintained. We recommend therefore that government not regulate the type of production model or system that producers must use on their farms.

In terms of regulations monitoring enforcement, as I mentioned before, hog farming is subject to more public scrutiny and media attention than any other land use in agri Manitoba. We, as the Pork Council, encourage all producers to undertake full compliance with all applicable recommendations. Again, compared to Saskatchewan and North Dakota, Manitoba has the highest level of enforcement and soil auditing. And this includes the only jurisdiction, as I have mentioned, that requires the submission of annual soil tests prior to manure application by all
medium and large livestock producers, the in-field utilizing of soil tests, and the only jurisdiction in Canada where environment officers are empowered to issue automatic tickets.

We do however feel that there is a need for the province to hire more enforcement staff to ensure that all producers are in compliance with the regulations.

The Manitoba Government has committed to doing ten per cent of all manure management plans in terms of audits, and we feel that with more enforcement staff, they would be able to fulfill that mandate. We also feel that, and recommend that municipalities hire more development officers to monitor and enforce local conditions of approval, those conditions which they themselves have said they need to enforce.

We wish to also recommend that the province proceed to amend the Pesticides and Fertilizers Control Act to implement the mandatory certification for manure applicators as soon as possible. I think we heard that before, that we are prepared as an industry to have that done.

Both increased monitoring and enforcement and the certification of manure applicators is important
to our industry to ensure accountability for all
producers and to ensure and build public
confidence that environmental regulations and local
conditions of approval are, in fact, being
followed.

Working in partnership, and I am
moving to a conclusion here, we are committed to
work to ensure the sustainable development of
Manitoba's pig industry producing safe quality
food in an environmentally and socially
sustainable manner. The government again needs to
look at other policy tools other than regulation,
and we believe that government and industry
working in partnership can achieve more, we can do
it sooner and at less cost when we work together.

What we would like to see happen is
the Manitoba Government join the producers in
lobbying the Federal Government to remove
specifically two barriers that restrict our
ability to manage phosphorous. The first is to
amend table 4 of the Animal Feed Act, which limits
the benefits of phytase, which has the potential
to reduce phosphorous by 40 per cent. Feed
manufacturers today are obligated to add mineral
phosphates to the feed rations and, of course, we
have concerns about that and we are using phytase to try to reduce it, so it counterbalances it.

The second area in which we could use government's help is the need for CFIA to license grain varieties to remove barriers to allow the registration of the low phytate feed grains, and that in itself would also provide us with an ability to manage our phosphorous.

To move forward in the next little while with all of the new regulations and with the phosphorous challenge, and the opportunity to improve our footprint, if you will, on the landscape, livestock producers are going to need help. They can't do it on their own. They are already making significant investments on their own farms, and as an industry as we have indicated, but they need help particularly in those areas southeast Manitoba and the Red River Valley where in fact more public incentives are required.

We feel as well that in that sense we need to remove the government pause or moratorium, which we believe is counterproductive, for four reasons. The industry is prevented from closing down old facilities and consolidating them into
modern facilities which would have to comply immediately with the higher environmental standards for nitrogen and phosphorous. They are prevented from doing that.

Secondly, the pause threatens the economic viability of the industry by encouraging producers to build finishing facilities for their weanlings in other provinces and states. This results in the loss of real value added jobs in processing and other related support industries, reduces markets for local grain producers, and reduces the potential for raising more tax revenues to support vital services and jobs in rural communities.

Thirdly, it discourages farmers from making long-term investments in new facilities and technologies which will result in a better environment for all Manitobans. Investment, as we know, is all about confidence in the future. Arbitrary decisions done for political reasons, in our view, do little to inspire confidence.

Our last reason is, the immediate impact of a moratorium is lost jobs and investment. The key question that we have for the Commission is, how does this moratorium or pause
build a sustainable industry and a sustainable future for Manitoba?

And I would now like to turn it over to the chairman for concluding comments.

MR. KYNOCH: Once again, I want to thank you for your time and for giving us an opportunity to speak on behalf of the Manitoba hog producers.

Over the last two months you have heard from a lot of people about the hog production and the hog industry in general in Manitoba. The majority of these presentations have been favorable and in support of our industry. I urge you to take that into account as you put your report together. Do not allow yourself to get swayed by a small vocal minority who philosophically oppose the hog industry. I trust you will stick to the issues at hand and within the scope of your review, that is the environmental sustainability of our industry here in Manitoba.

As I have said before, we are confident that this review will prove what we already know, that the hog industry is environmentally sustainable and good for Manitoba.
Manitoba hog producers already follow some of the toughest environmental rules and regulations in existence.

On behalf of the hog producers, Manitoba Pork Council invests millions of dollars into research to improve production practices and our impact on environment. In short, hog producers are good stewards of the land and will continue to be, protecting our land and precious resources for our future generations.

More than anything, we encourage you to move swiftly as you prepare your report. The government did significant damage last December by introducing a pause on our industry and halting any new development or expansion. This has tied farmers' hands and prevented any forward planning. We are already seeing equipment dealers and construction crews facing layoffs. The long-term effects of the pause could be very negative for the future of our industry and, ultimately, the Manitoba economy. We want the pause lifted so we can move forward and hog farmers can get back to business, just like everyone else.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to seeing your report.
THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I just have two or three questions of clarification really. On page 2-10, the very first paragraph -- just let me review this for a moment. Yes, the last part of the first paragraph you say, and producers are required to keep records on consumption rates. Is that all producers or producers over a certain size?

MR. DICKSON: The producers who are licensed for these 215 have to keep records of what water consumption they have. And I know most producers under 25,000 litres per day, most of them keep some sort of records. The reason being is it determines how much your storage facility is filling up, because the water going in goes somewhere else.

THE CHAIRMAN: Further down that same page, you talk about the annual allocation of groundwater is equivalent to the average annual precipitation, et cetera. That allocation, is that just the 215 or is that all hog farmers?

MR. DICKSON: That is the 215 water rights licenses, and we did a calculation based on that. It would account for about 80 per cent of the production, as we outlined in the original
THE CHAIRMAN: So that is about 80 per cent, those 215 licenses represent about 80 per cent of the industry?

MR. DICKSON: They are the larger operations, some of these smaller users, the water is also used for, say community purposes, if it is a Hutterite Colony of a certain size they may have a license at that level.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. Page 3.5, and you have mentioned this other places as well, you talk about Manitoba pig producers spending between 18 to 28 million annually. Was that done in some kind of a report?

MR. DICKSON: I think we sent it on a report done by the University of Manitoba, Professor Don Flaten.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is probably in one of those three feet of binders, or foot and a half of binders you gave us. Okay.

MR. DICKSON: Well, you asked us to send you stuff.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm only be facetious. I will find it. Thank you. That is all I have for clarification. Do you have any questions for
clarification?

MR. MOTHERAL: No, I had a couple of land planning but you have brought them forward.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, thank you all very much for your presentation here this afternoon and your participation throughout this process.

I scolded somebody earlier for clapping, so I will repeat the scolding.

I have very few closing comments and I will just basically make some comments to wrap up the last couple of months. As has been noted a few times this is the seventeenth and final day of the public hearing part of this review. In some ways, I suppose we could call it our second phase, the first phase having been the scoping part of it. We will have, I'm not going to get at how many more phases, but our review will change in focus and the way we approach it over the next few months.

I think it was Peter in his comments noted that we have had about 150 participants come out and make presentations during the 17 hearings. We have heard on just about every imaginable topic related to pork production, and we have heard on
the broad spectrum one to the other as far as
being pro or con the industry. And for the most
part, we haven't had a lot of repetition in what
we have heard. And also for the most part, people
have been very respectful of other participants,
whether they agreed with their positions or not.

The next phase, we will be doing a
number of things over the next couple of months.
One thing we will be doing is touring a number of
hog production facilities. We will probably in
late June, hopefully in late June we will receive
the research that we've contracted with a couple
of different parties, the University of Manitoba,
and the International Institute for Sustainable
Development. That will come to us, as we have
noted, it will be posted, as it is received it
will be posted on our website. As I noted earlier
in response to Glen, we will allow a reasonable
amount of time to respond. At this point I don't
know how long that will be. It won't be overly
lengthy, but it won't be ridiculously short
either.

There was some comments made actually
by, I think both of the closing parties as to sort
of the independence of the research and who we
should trust. Believe me, we are well aware that some of the research that we will be getting may well come down on one side or the other. But have no fear, we didn't fall off turnip trucks, I think we can weigh and assess the research that we will be getting. And if there are some issues that we clearly have trouble with, we will find some completely independent people to give us an assessment of that. And as well we will get comments from a number of the parties who have appeared before us in the last couple of months, once they have had a chance to look at this research.

Our target date for a final report remains the end of this year, so December 2007. I had indicated on earlier occasions that we may put out an interim report. At this point, I cannot guarantee that we are going to do that. A concern that we have is that with the huge amount of work that we are going to have to wade through over the next few months, focusing on an interim report too early in the process may cause us to miss the December date, which we really want to meet. I can't say 100 per cent we will meet it, but we certainly really want to meet that December date.
Having said that, I would like to thank all of you for coming out here today. I would like to thank the many people who have appeared before us in 14 different communities over the last couple of months for their role in this.

There is still an opportunity for people to make written submissions by the 7th of May. Information in that respect is available at the back of the room and also on our website. If you particularly want to keep abreast of the process over the next few months, just check in with our website, there will be regular updates on our website.

Anything else? Haven't missed anything?

MR. MOTHERAL: I don't think so. I would just like to say to you, I would like to thank you for the privilege of being on this particular --

THE CHAIRMAN: Well you better wait, you are not finished with me yet.

MR. MOTHERAL: I realize that. Okay, in other words you want me to be quiet right now.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, I don't. I'm
embarrassed by compliments, but thank you very much.

MR. MOTHERAL: I want to say, I consider this a privilege, and I know we have a hard task ahead of us, but just as some person put it, this is not about picking sides, this is about dealing with issues and that is the way I will be approaching this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Cathy, have I missed anything? Thank you all very much. I'm actually quite amazed that we got through ahead of schedule today, but I guess one cancelled presentation and one no show has helped us achieve that. So we stand adjourned.

(Adjourned at 4:40 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE

CECELIA REID and DEBRA KOT, Court Reporters, in the Province of Manitoba, do hereby certify the foregoing pages are a true and correct transcript of my Stenotype notes as taken by me at the time and place hereinbefore stated.

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Cecelia Reid

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Debra Kot