



## POLICY PAPER

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# Beneficial Management Practices

April 2010

Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) are activities that help farmers minimize environmental impacts and improve the efficiency of their agricultural operations. Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) supports the use of BMPs on farms in Manitoba and incentive programs that assist farmers with associated costs.

BMP incentive programs must receive adequate funding from government to ensure that the programs are accessible to all producers who desire to participate.

Recognizing that financial resources may be limited, it is important to ensure that a practical cost share limit is implemented that balances the distribution of available funding with the need to fund higher cost priority projects.

KAP recognizes that government will use BMP incentive programs to encourage the adoption of practices that address issues that government and society consider a priority. KAP supports this approach to achieving environmental goals as opposed to the increased regulation of industry, however, government must ensure that funding is available to all sectors in all regions of the province.

KAP encourages government to engage with producer groups at the initial program development stages. Government will then be able to more effectively choose qualifying BMPs, set priority areas, develop administration systems, and make decisions on other program details that producers will respond to positively and maximize program benefits.

For incentive program administration, KAP believes that it is important for an independent third party organization to be used to ensure that all confidential information is not subject to Freedom of Information requests. KAP requests that the agency administering the incentive program make fully trained staff available to applicants to assist them with the application process. Further, KAP requests that rejected applicants be informed of why their application was not approved for funding.

Regarding carbon credits or future marketable environmental benefits, KAP believes that government only be entitled to the portion of credits that corresponds with the cost share contributed to a project and for a limited time depending on the program.

## Summary of Recommendations

- KAP supports government BMP incentive programs and encourages their future development and expansion.
- KAP encourages high levels of funding to be committed to incentive programs by government and practical cost share limits to be put in place.
- KAP encourages the use of BMP incentive programs as an alternative to increased regulation as a tool to achieve environmental goals.
- KAP encourages the inclusion of producer groups in the development of future programming.
- KAP encourages the use of non-government organizations to hold confidential information.
- KAP believes that government should only be entitled to the portion of carbon credits that result from a project that is equal to the portion of total project costs that it funds.

*Keystone Agricultural Producers is Manitoba's largest general farm policy organization, representing over 7,000 farm families and 22 commodity groups throughout the province. Our strength is our democratic structure, and our mission is to represent and promote the interests of the province's farm families.*