MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

HOG PRODUCTION INDUSTRY REVIEW

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Held at Royal Canadian Legion

Stonewall, Manitoba

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2007

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APPEARANCES:

Clean Environment Commission:

Mr. Terry Sargeant	Chairman
Mr. Edwin Yee	Member
Mr. Wayne Motheral	Member
Ms. Cathy Johnson	Commission Secretary
Mr. Doug Smith	Report Writer

INDEX OF EXHIBITS

NO EXHIBITS MARKED

Tuesday, March 6, 2007
Upon commencing at 1:00 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome. I'm glad to see that a number of you moved up a row or two. We are really not quite as scary as we may look.

My name is Terry Sargeant. I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, as well as the chair of this panel. With me on the panel are Wayne Motheral and Edwin Yee.

I have a few opening comments to make, and then we will turn to the presentations or those who have indicated so far that they wish to make presentations this afternoon.

The Clean Environment Commission has been requested by the Minister of Conservation to conduct an investigation into the environmental sustainability of hog production in Manitoba. The Terms of Reference direct us to review the current environmental protection measures in place relating to hog production in this province, in order to determine their effectiveness for the purpose of managing the industry in an

environmentally sustainable manner.

Our investigation is to include a public component to gain advice and feedback from Manitobans. This will be by means of public meetings, such as this one, in the various regions of Manitoba to ensure broad participation from the general public and affected stakeholders.

We have also been asked to take into account efforts underway in other jurisdictions to manage hog production in a sustainable manner.

Further, we are to review the contents of a report prepared by Manitoba Conservation entitled "An Examination of the Environmental Sustainability of the Hog Industry in Manitoba." At the end of our investigation, we will consider various options and make recommendations in a report to the Minister on any improvements that may be necessary to provide for the environmental sustainability of hog production.

To ensure that our review does include issues of importance to all Manitobans, the panel has undertaken to hold 17 days of meetings in 14 communities throughout agri Manitoba. Today is our second day. These meetings started yesterday in Winnipeg and will conclude with what is

currently the final schedule -- the final meeting is scheduled for April 27th.

At these meetings, it is open to any groups or individuals to make a presentation to the panel on issues related to hog production in our province. For the most part, presentations are to be limited to 15 minutes. Exceptions may be made in some cases where a presenter needs more time.

Presenters will be asked to take an oath promising to tell the truth. Presentations should be relevant to the mandate given to the Commission by the Minister and to the issues described in the guide to public participation in this review. If a presentation is clearly not relevant, it will be ruled out of order. And if a presentation is clearly repetitive, it may also be ruled out of order.

Members of the panel may ask questions of any presenter during or after the presentation. There will be no opportunity for other presenters to question or cross-examine presenters.

In addition to the public meetings, the CEC is engaging consultants to assist us in this review. The results of those research

endeavours will be posted on our website upon receipt, which, for the most part, will be in late June. Parties, and that includes really anybody with an interest, will be invited to provide comment on any of those reports if they so wish. A reasonable, albeit brief period of time, will be allowed for this. Written submissions will also be accepted. Information as to how to submit written suggestions is available on our website, and the deadline for such written submission sincerely May 7th.

We also realize that many people are reluctant to make presentations in public, for a variety of reasons. To counter that, we have engaged a graduate student from the University of Manitoba to meet with, or discuss on the phone, with people who would rather not speak at the meetings. These meetings or conversations with this woman will be kept in confidence. Information as to how to contact her is available on our website, as well as at the table at the side of the room.

Some administrative matters. If you wish to make a presentation today and haven't already indicated, please register with Joyce at

the table at the side. As is our normal practice, we are recording these sessions. Verbatim transcripts will be available on our website in a day or so.

In respect of cell phones, final comment, I would ask that they be turned off or at least that the ring tone be turned off. And if you must take a call, I would ask that you leave the room, please. That's all I have to say by way of opening comments.

We have three individuals or groups that have indicated they wish to make presentations this afternoon. The first is Mr. Bill Massey and Mr. Jim McCowan; is that correct?

MR. McCOWAN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you please come up to the front table? Would you please state your names for the record, and then I will ask the commission secretary to administer the oath?

MR. MASSEY: Bill Massey, Grosse Isle.

MR. McCOWAN: And James McCowan, Grosse Isle.

BILL MASSEY and JIM McCOWAN, having been sworn, present as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: You may proceed.

MR. McCOWAN: I will begin by thanking the Commission for hearing our submission. We have been given this opportunity to speak before you. This presentation is a joint effort of the Concerned Citizens of Grosse Isle Committee has been in existence now for a number of years. The residents of Grosse Isle wish to thank the Commission for the opportunity to present our concerns about the hog production industry in Manitoba and, more specifically, in our area. We wish to commend the government for placing a moratorium on further construction and providing the opportunity for Manitobans to express their opinions at hearings such as this. Well done!

Our group was formed when the Rock Lake Colony Hutterite Colony at Grosse Isle proposed an expansion of their hog operation. As a community, we had some grave concerns about this proposal, because of its proximity to the village of Grosse Isle and the number of private residences within a mile of the proposed barn site.

And this slide, effectively the center of the yellow circle, of course, is the location

of the proposed barn. And, actually, subsequently that's been built. And then the individual residences are numbered with the "R" numbers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I just interrupt? The circle is one mile from the barn?

MR. McCOWAN: That's one mile. And the Village of Grosse Isle is right on -- sorry, in the corner of the picture, just outside of the one mile circle.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. McCOWAN: The rural Municipalities of Rosser and Rockwood are looking at Grosse Isle as a potential residential growth area and are proposing water and sewer for the community. And I see in the paper that the government of Manitoba, and I guess the Federal Government, have already committed several million dollars now to furthering this goal.

One of the problems that we have is that the local schools are facing declining enrollment and are actively looking at ways of attracting families to the area. And we feel that this may prove challenging with the hog facility in such close proximity to a town that's hoping to be growing.

Another concern with this location is the storage lagoon in the historic Grant's Lake Marsh drainage basin, which is part of the Sturgeon Creek watershed.

And slide number 2, the center of the slide effectively is the marsh. This photograph was taken in the summer in 2005 at the height of the rainy season. This whole area, Warren, Grosse Isle, Grosser, experienced upwards of 20-inches of rain, in a very short period of time, over about six weeks. So it's very illustrative of the potential flooding that could be faced right in and around where this particular lagoon is.

When the lagoon was constructed, the colony was considering test wells around the lagoon. Later, when they wished to expand their hog operation, test wells were again a consideration. To the best of our knowledge, none have been drilled, and there is no plan to do so at this point.

And this slide is a picture of the lagoon and the water that actually got right up to the edge of the lagoon in the summer of 2005. And this is just a short distance from the Grant's Lake Marsh.

As you can see from the aerial photograph, the lagoon is located on the very edge of a natural drain, which flows directly into the Sturgeon Creek drain, which flows past and sometimes into Grant's Lake. It continues as Sturgeon Creek and empties into the Assiniboine River, at Grant's Mill in Winnipeg.

As you can see from this slide, spillage or leakage from this holding facility will very quickly pollute the waters of Grant's Lake and Sturgeon Creek. The colony also assured residents that trees would be planted around the lagoon. To our knowledge, this has not been done.

In the fall of 2005, residents noticed liquid manure on the surface of a field directly beside Grant's Lake. Conservation was contacted and the colony received a letter of warning about the improper application of manure. As you can see, in this slide, the location of available spreading lands are fields on three sides of Grant's Lake. The colony uses lands adjacent Grant's Lake to spread manure. We believe that this should not be allowed to happen.

Actually, on the sheets here, the ones marked in red, they are not showing up very well

in red. But that is basically the lands right around the marsh that are available to the colony for spreading manure. It shows up much better in the book.

As you are undoubtedly aware, this is outdated technology for the handling of animal wastes. Far better systems exist that are environmentally safer, less of a health risk and make better use of manure as a plant nutrient. And we haven't included this article, actually, in the presentation, but we do have it with us and can make it available to the Commission, if they would like to have a look at it. It is one of many, many other alternatives to dealing with livestock waste.

And we believe the Province of Manitoba and the hog industry need to work together to make the industry profitable and sustainable without posing unacceptable hazards to the environment.

Another source of concern for us is the possible contamination of the aquifer in our area, and the amount of water that is used in this type of technology. Of the nine residences shown in this slide, R2 has been occupied by the same

family for the past 37 years. And, in fact, that's our own residence. And in that time, in our well, we have been faced with high nitrates. And one of the things that we have noticed over several years of water testing is that the pH of the water has gone from being overly basic to slightly acidic. Now, I have no scientific explanation for that. You know, the only thing that we could attach to that potentially is the demand on water out of the aquifer, and whether or not that would have some long-term effects, over a 30 or 40 year period, of the water quality.

R4 residents had an 80-foot well go dry in the past five years. And they subsequently drilled a 140 well, but got salty water, which hasn't been a problem in our immediate area.

We estimate that the hog operation will use as much as 20,000 gallons of water a day. And that is based on the Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals, table 4, page 16, of the Agriculture and Agrifood, Canada book. This does not include other waters needed on the colony for human consumption and the other livestock that exists.

As a point of interest as well, the

municipalities have drilled a heavily used public well into this same aquifer just immediately to the east of the colony. It is actually located between the colony and the Village of Grosse Isle.

What we're concerned about is what will be the long-terms effects of such extensive use of this aquifer? Most of the rural residents in our area can drink beautiful, good-tasting clean water that we pump from the ground on our respective properties. We want to keep it that way for ourselves and future generations.

Another serious concern that has just recently become apparent, since the new facility was opened last year, has been the odour. Although livestock has been in the new facility for only a relatively short period of time, six families out of the ten residences within the mile, and also people in Grosse Isle, have noticed an unacceptably strong pig smell.

And in the booklet here, there is a graph of the actual winds and from which direction they blow. As you can see from the slide, the most frequent winds are from the south. The most serious odour problem so far has been experienced by the R3 residents, which is 1900 feet due north

of the barn. The Village of Grosse Isle, which is just over a mile away, is affected by west-northwest and west winds a total of 13.8 percent of the time. The colony had suggested, right at the initial development stage of the project, that they were looking at odour filters to be installed, if odour was a problem, as part of a research project in conjunction with the University of Manitoba. To the best of our knowledge, nothing has been done.

We applaud the Province's initiative to maintain good air quality in regards to the regulation and enforcement of measures to reduce the negative results of burning crop residue. Severe penalties and strict enforcement have quickly brought this problem under control. We believe that noxious odours also negatively affect the quality of life and health of Manitobans. And, in our opinion, the same standards should apply.

Those of us that live within a mile radius, ten residences now in total, as well as the people living in Grosse Isle, are keeping data on the odour problem that we experience. We will be registering complaints with Conservation as

these situations occur. However, if this process is unsuccessful in addressing our concerns, what alternatives are left for citizens to pursue?

This facility is located in the Woodlands Municipality. However, two of the residences within the mile limit are in the Rockwood Municipality and three are in Rosser. The Village of Grosse Isle is located in the Rockwood and Rosser Municipalities. The majority of the people affected in this particular situation have no say because they are not part of the Woodlands Municipality.

When the colony decided not to expand, and to replace existing facilities, the size of the proposed barn seemed to be larger than required for the number of animal units that's on their farm. A further investigation revealed that because of a mistake in rewriting the regulations in the Farm Practices Guidelines, the colony was able to reduce the number of feeders in their operation by approximately 90 animals and increase the number of weanlings by nearly 2,000. It was our investigation that pointed out this discrepancy, and the engineering firm admitted making a mistake in providing information to the

Municipality.

When the Municipality issued a building permit for this development, the size of the barn was estimated, no conditions were placed on construction, such as drilling the test wells around the lagoon, nor, in spite of our suggestion, was a bond required to cover any unforeseen expenses. The only cost to the colony was a $50 building permit.

During the construction of the barn, truck traffic hauling created -- or, sorry, during the construction of the barn, truck traffic hauling material created dust hazards and damaged roads in the municipalities of Rosser and Woodlands. However well-meaning, and perhaps because of a lack of experience and knowledge, the officials in the Woodlands Municipality did not take the necessary steps to ensure that the project development did not negatively impact on the residents, most of whom do not live within the municipality's boundaries. Rosser Municipality had to absorb the cost of the necessary dust control and to repair the road damage incurred within its boundaries by this construction.

So to summarize, we have looked at

these issues that we have touched on briefly throughout this, and we have some suggestions that we would like to submit to the Commission.

1: That the Province ensure, as much as possible, that Municipal representatives are properly informed and trained to deal with these issues before a permit for an ILO can be issued.

2: The Province take steps to hold the Municipalities accountable for actions that impact negatively on residents and jurisdictions outside of their boundaries. And this one is particularly important, again, because we actually have three municipalities involved just because of the location of this particular facility.

3: That ILO's, storage lagoons, test wells, et cetera, be monitored by Conservation and sufficient staff be put in place for this purpose and to provide enforcement.

4: That no ILO will be built closer than one mile from any residence and only a limited number can be located within two miles.

5: That the appropriate containment dikes or berms be constructed around all storage lagoons to contain possible spills or a failure of the lagoon wall. And maybe just to expand on that

just a little bit, when we looked at this, you know, we were thinking, well, you know, in terms of secondary containment. Now, as a small farmer myself, for example, with fuel storage, if you have more than 1,000 gallon fuel storage container, it has to be either a doubled wall container or some form of a diking system in place. Whereas the lagoon, if there is a wall failure, an overflow situation, well, that's it, there is no second line of defence.

And one of the things that we considered that might be feasible is to build a secondary lower dike out away from the lagoon, something that you could actually farm right over top of it. Obviously, it wouldn't have to be the same height as the lagoon wall. That way, if there ever was a failure, then at least it maintains that, rather than allowing it to flow freely to wherever the lowest point is. In this case, maybe into Grant's Lake or into Sturgeon Creek.

6: The set-back distances for surface water courses need to take into consideration conditions in wet years, as illustrated in all of the slides we have shown.

7: Spreading of manure should not be permitted in ecologically sensitive areas.

8: That the Province review the minimum capacity for 200 days of storage for lagoons to allow for adverse weather and moisture conditions. Clearly, in the fall of 2005, the conditions never existed to properly be able to inject the manure from the lagoon just because of the incredible amount of rain that we had had over the course of the summer.

9: That a comprehensive water usage policy be put in place, and that if any one user exceeds a pre-determined limit of water usage, to measure the actual withdrawal rates, to monitor the aquifer water levels and the water quality on an ongoing basis to protect the groundwater sources in the province.

10: That the Province develop a process to determine unacceptable levels of odour, create policies on this problem, and put in place enforcement and penalties similar to the crop residue burning standards.

11: That the Province require that a bond of at least 10 percent of the value of the project be posted before any ILO can be

constructed.

And just to summarize, the concerns that we raise this afternoon are nothing new. We know of the problems that have occurred with this technology in jurisdictions where this type of hog industry has been allowed to develop in our country and in the Unites States. We know there are better ways of dealing with the animal waste. We hear of the pollution in Lake Winnipeg. We know the province is now also looking at Lake Manitoba. We understand that the hog industry is part of the cause of pollution, and other sources need to be addressed as well. This is too big a problem for local governments or citizens alone to resolve. The Province needs to continue to take the lead in making the necessary tough decisions and enforcing the regulations to ensure, as much as possible, a clean environment now and in the future.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. McCowan. When was this barn that you were talking about built?

MR. McCOWAN: It was started in the summer or the fall, I guess, of 2004.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was there a new manure storage facility, a lagoon, built at that time as well?

MR. McCOWAN: This particular lagoon was actually built prior to the barn. It was not used until the barn was actually built. But it was actually constructed, I believe, two summers before that, so in 2002. I am not 100 percent sure. But it actually was put in before the barn was constructed.

THE CHAIRMAN: And where is the lagoon located? You had it in that first slide you showed us.

MR. McCOWAN: In the very -- it is the very first page.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. McCOWAN: It is the yellow rectangle in that picture the one outside of the yellow one mile circle.

THE CHAIRMAN: The one that says "outside of the existing R.M."?

MR. McCOWAN: Yes. So directly west, about a mile and a quarter of the colony.

THE CHAIRMAN: And do you know how many animal units are kept in that barn?

MR. MASSEY: 788, I think it is.
THE CHAIRMAN: Animal units?
MR. MASSEY: Yes.
THE CHAIRMAN: So about 1,000 animals, or I guess more, if there are weanlings.
MR. MASSEY: There are 1,250 sows and 3,480 feeders and about -- I think about 4,000 weanlings, but I could be out a little bit.
THE CHAIRMAN: 1,250 sows?
MR. MASSEY: 1,250 sows, yeah.
THE CHAIRMAN: 3,400?
MR. MASSEY: 3,400 feeders and I think around 4,000 weanlings. Now, not all of the animals are in that barn. The colony still has -- what's the term for the young stock?
MR. McCOWAN: Brooder.
MR. MASSEY: Not brooder, that's chicken stock.
MS. JOHNSON: Nursery.
MR. MASSEY: Yes, nursery, thank you. The nursery is in a separate facility or part of it, anyway.
THE CHAIRMAN: So that would be a lot more than 700 or 800 animal units, wouldn't if? It?

MR. MASSEY: Oh, yes, there would be.
THE CHAIRMAN: That would be 5,000.
MR. MASSEY: 5,000 to 7,000 at any given time.
THE CHAIRMAN: And they have had a lot of animals, even before this new barn was built?
MR. MASSEY: Yes. They had 10 biotechs that existed on the property that were just recently de-commissioned.
THE CHAIRMAN: By biotechs do you mean hoop?
MR. MASSEY: Yes. There were five of those. And approximately 3,800 animals inside there, I believe.
THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. Wayne, do you have anything?
MR. MOTHERAL: Yes. Grosse Isle is -- when you say there is Rockwood and Rosser involved, is Grosse Isle kind of in between both or one of those?
MR. McCOWAN: Actually, yes. The east/west street there that runs kind of through the center of town actually is the dividing line between the Municipalities of Rockwood and Rosser. So the south side of the town is in Rosser and the

north side is all in Rockwood.

MR. MOTHERAL: Okay. And the barns are in?

MR. McCOWAN: Woodlands.

MR. MOTHERAL: Woodlands. Does Woodlands have a development plan?

MR. MASSEY: I don't believe they do, but I'm not totally certain on that. I know they are not part of the South Interlake Development Group.

MR. MOTHERAL: Probably one thing, and it's interesting in the new Planning Act where municipalities must come into the livestock operation policy, they must have that in place. That would maybe be to the residents' advantage.

MR. McCOWAN: In the future?

MR. MOTHERAL: Yes, I'm talking in the future.

MR. McCOWAN: Yes, absolutely.

MR. MOTHERAL: And to develop that plan, obviously, there will be public meetings where the public will have input into that. So sometimes your best avenue is in your own local area in your planning policies. And hopefully when the municipality is about to establish that

operating policy, that you make sure you have your input into your distances, your set-backs. I guess you know all about that.

MR. MASSEY: One of our biggest problems, of course, is the majority of the people who are affected by this development do not live in the Municipality of Woodlands, and that's an issue. And that's a concern for us that decisions will be made in the Municipality of Woodlands which will affect residents of Rockwood and Rosser negatively. And we really have no input into that situation.

MR. MOTHERAL: This is where a larger planning area is advantageous.

MR. MASSEY: Exactly.

MR. MOTHERAL: So you can pass those things on to your local municipal people. That's all, thanks.

THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

MR. YEE: Yes, just one point of clarification. You noted in your presentation that they are using outdated technology for handling the animal waste. Can I just ask for a clarification what sort of technology you're referring to?

MR. McCOWAN: Well, you know, right off the bat, there was an article in the Western Producer about a separator that basically eliminates a lot of the water out of the -- rather than dumping it out into the lagoon and dealing with the tens of thousands of liquid hog manure, it is actually broken down. It is de-watered and, you know, the nutrients are separated out of the waste. And from that perspective, although always the first thing that comes up is, yes, but there is a cost to that. Well, of course there is a cost to building a lagoon as well.

And, you know, we look at it and we say that it is more environmentally sustainable. Well, if it is de-watered, then those nutrients are available on a dry basis, then it's something that -- even if it is something that cannot be used by the livestock operator themselves, it is something that maybe they can turn around and sell. Certainly if you look at the cost of fertilizer, lately it is not something that's going down in value. It is just going up astronomically. So it may actually be an opportunity to generate extra revenue out of the hog operation by dealing with the waste product.

So in terms it maybe ending up being revenue neutral or even revenue positive, depending how you look at it.

MR. YEE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just to comment on that, I am not sure if it's fair to say that it is outdated technology, because most operations in the province are still using this technology. There are new technologies coming online, such as the one that was featured in Western Producer which are better, but so far not widespread. And in some cases, some of them, one we heard about yesterday afternoon, extremely expensive. Others are much less expensive, but still relatively new in the process.

I want to thank you very much for your presentation and, in particular, for your specific recommendations. Thank you.

MR. McCOWAN: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next person on the list, and I may well mispronounce his name, John Preun?

MR. PREUN: Preun.

THE CHAIRMAN: Right, a German name. Mr. Preun, would you state your name for the

record, please, and the commission secretary will administer the oath.

MR. PREUN: John Preun, President of Manitoba Pork Marketing.

JOHN PREUN, having been sworn, presents as follows:

MR. PREUN: Thank you for listening to our presentations today. I believe that I have something to add as a grain and hog farmer, and also President of the Manitoba Pork Marketing. Manitoba Pork Marketing represents marketing for over 600 hog producers in Manitoba, as well as in Saskatchewan. A recent decision by the Provincial Government to impose a moratorium on our industry will have dire consequences on the businesses if this is not looked after quickly and properly.

The livelihoods of all of these families contribute significant financial benefits to the province. The results of the Clean Environment Commission hearings will not only impact its producers, but the industry as a whole; therefore, it is paramount that the correct approach be taken to these hearings and the right decisions made. And I'm sure that the producers will embrace all recommendations coming out of

these hearings, providing that they are practical and affordable.

Sound science should be used to determine the outcome of the hearings. As all hog industry stakeholders -- and all hog industry stakeholders should have input because they all have a vested interest in the outcome.

Time is of the essence. We recommend that this issue be dealt with as quickly as possible so that we can arrive at tangible solutions to minimize the economic damage to our industry.

We realize that due diligence needs to be done here because I am a resident of this province and I do care about the environment. The family farms I represent are all responsible stewards of the land. They do what they can to make sure that the environment stays safe. They produce safe and healthy food at affordable prices. They also raise their families on these farms, and many hope that some day their children will follow in their footsteps. And because of this, the environmental sustainability is extremely important to them.

Manure management has come a long way

over the years. Gone are the days of manure piles and winter spreading. They have been replaced with engineered lagoons, manure injection processes that put the nutrients into the ground where they are needed. All hog farms soil test to identify nutrient requirements for specific crops and file Manure Management Plans as required -- as a requirement of the development agreement with our municipalities.

On my farm, manure is considered an integral part of our soil fertility plan. It is a valuable resource and not a waste material. The value of manure on our farm alone is roughly $66,000 a year. And it helps us minimize our dependents on costly commercial fertilizers and, therefore, it is in my own interests to use it wisely.

I believe that the hog producers have been unfairly singled out with the hog moratorium. While the industry may be contributing to the phosphorous problem, I doubt that you will find that we are the entire problem. I believe we have to examine other contributors to the problem: Industries, the City of Winnipeg, towns and municipalities in the province that dispose of

human waste. And we have to make the standards the same. I believe that the City of Winnipeg, if you add all together what phosphate-based soaps and detergents that they use, I am sure that they are a big contributor to the problem.

Over the years, my own family farm has worked with Manitoba Agriculture conducting studies, straw covers, soil testing, water samples, test bores for sampling water, manure analysis. We have always exhibited a willingness to work with the government to address the issues facing our industry and the environment. And I would suggest that all producers work with the government to address this issue because our future is at stake here. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Preun. How large is your hog operation?

MR. PREUN: Pardon?

THE CHAIRMAN: How large is your hog operation?

MR. PREUN: We have 470 sows, farrow to finish.

THE CHAIRMAN: And from that you get 66,000 worth of fertilizer a year?

MR. PREUN: Based on the suggested

retail price of fertilizers this year, that's what the value is at our operation.

THE CHAIRMAN: That's pretty significant, isn't it?

MR. PREUN: Very significant.

THE CHAIRMAN: That's not a large operation, 400 animals.

MR. PREUN: Not by today's standards, no.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am just a little curious about the Manitoba Pork Marketing. Could you just explain a little bit more what that is or what that organization is?

MR. PREUN: Manitoba Pork Marketing is a co-op which markets hogs for the 600 producers in Manitoba. We don't market for all of them, but a fair number of them. Most of the Hutterite brethren market through the co-op.

THE CHAIRMAN: So it's through the co-op?

MR. PREUN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Wayne?

MR. MOTHERAL: Nothing.

THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

MR. YEE: No.

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

MR. PREUN: Thank you very much. George Matheson? Mr. Matheson, would you state your name for the record, please, and then take the oath?

MR. MATHESON: George Matheson.

GEORGE MATHESON, having been sworn, presents as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: You may continue.

MR. MATHESON: As introduced, my name is George Matheson. I live one and a half miles south of Stonewall, where I farm with my wife of 26 years and our four children, ages 10 to 20. I have been a hog producer for 25 years and have capacity for an 85 sow, farrow to finish operation. I am one of just a few remaining hog producers in the Stonewall area.

I consider my operation to be environmentally safe and sustainable, with minimal disease and odour problems. My barns and sheds are approximately 200 metres north of my house and in the same yard. Most of my pigs are raised outdoors in deep straw bedded sheds. This includes all hogs from 50-250 pounds, as well as

all gestating sows. Only farrowing sows and pigs less than 50 pounds are is kept in a climate controlled environment indoors.

I have about 530 acres of cropland. A year's supply of manure from my pigs would cover about 100 of those acres. Thus, every five years my land has the potential to be spread with manure. This is more than enough land base for this size of operation. The manure has been very good for the soil, as the straw becomes like compost and adds a lot of fiber. My farm's soil is classified as a clay-loam and I am pleased with its quality. I avoid spreading close to ditches so that surface water run-off is protected. I have soil tested and will add synthetic nitrogen, phosphorous, sulphur and potash where applicable. Because the manure is spread over such a large land base, I have never had any groundwater quality problems.

I grow four different crops and rotate from an oilseed to a cereal. The rotation is wheat, flax, barley, and canola, and each crop will utilize the soil's nutrients in a different say. It is a very sustainable farm in terms of soil quality.

My barns and outdoor sheds are about 300 metres from the nearest road. Straw bedding is a great way of reducing odours. And I am inclined to spread long distances from public roadways so that what odours there my be are not a nuisance to my neighbours. I have 70 acres of natural trees on my property and they reduce the wind movement and erosion, and this further reduces odour transfer. Mortalities are composted in a straw layered system.

Our hogs are produced for the commodity market. I also sell government inspected pork products direct to a growing public clientele interested in a naturally raised product, which I feel is of superior quality. Like all hog farms in Manitoba, my facilities and animal husbandry practices must meet C.Q.A., that's Canadian Quality Assurance, standards to ensure that the public receives a safe product. This means that all production records are reviewed annually and all facilities are inspected every two years. I keep disease transmission to other farms to a minimum by introducing new stock only once or twice per year from a high health herd.

In some ways, my hog farming methods are not typical in today's provincial industry. It is just one of many methods producers use to raise hogs in an environmentally safe and sustainable fashion. The Manitoba provincial manure regulations are among the toughest standards in North America.

I am proud of my farm's environmental record, soil quality, minimal odour emissions, and humanitarian animal husbandry methods.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Matheson.

MR. MOTHERAL: When you say you produce enough manure to do 100 acres a year, that's sufficient for your crops for that particular -- for 100-acres?

MR. MATHESON: In most cases, I will also add synthetic fertilizers, yeah. But that's roughly the land that I will cover in a year.

MR. MOTHERAL: And do you soil test?

MR. MATHESON: Yes, I have soil testing.

MR. YEE: I was just wondering, did you have any odour complaints from nearby residences or neighbours?

MR. MATHESON: I have had one over the course of my history of production, yeah. There is a neighbour directly east of me, probably within 600 metres of my facilities. There was a mediator from the Manitoba Pork Council who came out to speak to both parties and came up with an acceptable solution to it, and that really took care of the problem.

MR. YEE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: How long have you been farming in this location?

MR. MATHESON: 25 years come this May.

THE CHAIRMAN: And you've only had the one complaint in 25 years?

MR. MATHESON: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: That sounds pretty good. Thank you very much, Mr. Matheson.

MR. MATHESON: You're welcome.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you please state your name for the record and then the commission secretary will administer an oath?

MR. VISE: My name is Peter Vise.

PETER VISE, having been sworn, presents as follows:

MR. VISE: As I said, my name is Peter

Vise. I speak as a self-interested person in this industry. I am the owner, the family owner. I am the owner of a small Manitoba company, Precision Feed and Envirotech Systems. We have about 20 employees working for us. And with the dependents, I mean, we have about 80 people that are directly dependent on the welfare of this industry. I'm sure that if you extend that in relatives terms to the industry, we are well in excess of $1 billion, and we are relatively small. There are thousands and thousands of people in Manitoba that are in the same boat as we are.

Now, having said that, I think that all of those people in the industry are fully aware that just because their economics and viability depends on it, that they should not be given a licence to pollute. And, therefore, they have a very great self-interest to make sure that the industry is economically viable and sustainable. And I'm sure they all work towards that same interest.

Now, the only thing that they probably ask, all ask for, and we ask for it, is that the facts and eventual decisions on your part are made on the basis of science, rather than biased

opinions, from people that are opposed to this industry. We are not afraid of the science backing us up and the rules and regulation that may have to apply to this industry to make sure that we do not contaminate the environment and that it is a sustainable industry.

The greatest problem today, I hear, is not hogs, although they seem to be in the limelight quite a bit, it's the CO2 pollution. And the hog industry has very little to do with that. They say that is the greatest short-term industry and, basically, that comes directly from people. So I think all this industry asks for is they are treated at the same level and in the same evaluation as others are, rather than on bias.

And you take, as I said, the industry is not objecting to following the rules and regulations. But that manure should be looked upon, as I think I heard somebody mention, as a rich essential nutrient for agriculture. Now, can you put it on in synthetic form or you can cycle it through the hogs. Now, if phosphate is the biggest problems in hogs, I'm a livestock nutritionist, and the hog consumes about three kilograms of phosphate per animal. One goes back

in the manure as indigestible manner and the other two go out in meat and bone and are part of the species intake cycling.

Now, if raise eight million, but we don't finish all of these hogs, we are looking at 8 million kgs of phosphates produced, yeah, 8 million from the hog industry. They tell me that Manitoba has around 10 million-acres of arable land, and that they apply about 15-30 k's of phosphate a year, and that comes to 150,000 tons a year. The manure industry only has about 8,000 tons of it, not even 5 percent, that comes from the hog industry. So the problem is not the volume of phosphate, it is the distribution of the phosphate and, to some extent, nitrogen, too, are the main things.

So I don't think anybody in the industry is objecting to rules that whatever is put -- is taken out of the soil can be put back. And I think the whole industry will, you know, very favourably look upon that, as I said, as long as the facts are based on science.

Now, there are also new technologies that will make the extraction of phosphates and then distribute it over a wider base than there

currently is. And these new technologies, you know, they will be implemented.

You know, I wish this subject matter could be put into a more dynamic speech like, you know, John F. Kennedy: Don't ask what the country can do for you, but, you know, what you can do for your country? However, this subject matter does not lend itself very well to that, I would think.

And I think this is better to be compared with every time a mother changes a diaper, should it be a diaper, should it be a Pamper? Should it be a diaper, should it be a Pamper? Now, you can go into the advantages of Pampers and diapers. And, you know, the ultimate line is, I would say, don't throw out the baby with the bath water because it is a very viable industry and a lot of people are dependent on it. So that's my comments.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Vise.

MR. MOTHERAL: Well, I just found your comments on phosphorus very interesting. That's great.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Vise. Now, is there anyone else who would like to make a presentation this afternoon?

MR. MATHESON: May I make an observation?

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly. My name is Bill Matheson.

BILL MATHESON, having been sworn, presents as follows:

MR. MATHESON: My comment to the board or the commission would be to not get hung up on numbers per se. When you ask the particular size of these operations, whether they are 400 or 3,000 or 2,000, make sure you understand the principle of animal units, that's the common denominator. And I didn't hear you ask that of anyone. You asked numbers, more like how many weanlings, how many stockers, how many sows. It's all irrelevant. Animal units is the common denominator that will put every presentation on equal footing.

THE CHAIRMAN: Actually, I believe I did ask. The first question when I was asking Mr. McCowan, I asked about animal units, and they gave numbers of actual animals. And then we sort of loosely, in our heads, tried to translate it. And I think we came up with a few thousand animal units, but we are aware of the concept of animal

units.

MR. MATHESON: Yes, that would be my point. Because numbers of animals, it's animal units which is a measuring factor which puts everybody who is going to make a presentation to you on equal footing.

THE CHAIRMAN: No. We are aware of that. We have been briefed by people in various departments of the Manitoba Government, well briefed by them on these factors, including the animal units.

MR. MATHESON: It is one thing to be briefed and another to understand it, though.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I think we understand it. Certainly Wayne does because he is a farmer.

MR. MATHESON: Okay. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now, does anyone else want to make a presentation or an observation? It is going to be a long afternoon.

What we will do, then, is remain here until 5:00. If any of you decide you want to say something between now and 5:00, we will hear you out. If other people show up who want to make a presentation, we will reconvene and hear them.

At 5:00 we will break for supper. We will be back after supper as we have at least one person confirmed to present after supper. So we will adjourn for now. And if anyone wants to say their peace, just let one of us know and we will reconvene.

(PROCEEDINGS RECESSED AT 2:00 P.M
AND RECONVENED AT 7:00 P.M.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome back. We have two people who have indicated they wish to make presentation this is evening. If there are any others who wish to do so, I would ask that you just let Joyce, at the side table, know. The first person who is on our agenda for this evening is Craig Mackie.

I would also just like to remind you of my earlier admonition, please turn off cell phones.

Mr. Mackie, would you state your name for the record and then Miss Johnson, the commission secretary, will administer an oath?

MR. MACKIE: Yes. I'm Craig Mackie. I'm a resident of Winnipeg. And I have a cabin on Lake Winnipeg that I love very dearly.

CRAIG MACKIE, having been sworn, presents as follows:

MR. MACKIE: It's great to see so many people caring about the state of Manitoba as it pertains to nutrient loading in our wonderful lake. I have set the timing on this. If I get a little big lagged, I am going to have to go back. Sorry, folks. Yes, let me read it to script.

At first glance, the sun rises like every day across the 18 miles from Gimli to Victoria Beach. And that's actually where my family enjoys our morning coffee. That's the perch right from our cabin in Lockwood. I have been going up there since I was born in 1954.

Lake Winnipeg is the 10th largest fresh water lake in the world. Let's see if I can do this now. We enjoy a lot of things, like everybody else, canoeing, fishing, running into those beautiful waves when we get those southeast squalls. And we share a mutual respect for the history of the lake it's its very, very important heritage.

One of the things that we enjoy doing, my father-in-law is a retired Dean of Science from the University of Manitoba, we participate in an

annual "Mizzen Mast" flag pole raising ceremony, where all of the flags fly from our heritage, me being Scottish, he being from the Isle of Man. And the "Triskele" is actually that three-legged symbol that you see on that red flag.

But overloading of nutrients into that lake is a big term, and it needs to be kind of determined as to what it really entails. Well, the truth is that that lake has numerous sources of nutrient loading, but phosphorous is really our big kicker and, to a lesser extent, nitrogen. Nitrogen will fix and kind of almost look after itself. But there are countless sources contributing to the problem from urban, as well as rural areas alike. A nice shot of the Gimli harbour.

The interesting thing about the lake is that it represents the third largest watershed in North America. Of course, the Great Lakes would be number two, and the Mississippi Delta would be number one. What people don't realize is that when good old Lake Agassiz left, it left a 39-1 watershed to surface area ratio. We have water flowing as far away from the Rockies and the Continental Divide to the south. So it is just

under one million square kilometers that represents water flowing into that beautiful body of water.

The Northern States, sorry, agricultural land and major cities along that waterways, all contribute significantly to the nutrient loading ultimately discharged into the south basin, making its way into the north basin.

We have a group of marine biologists that I was lucky enough to travel with this year on the Namao, which is the retired Coast Guard cutter that goes on to Lake Winnipeg. And they told me that there are 60 different in-flow rivers and major waterways that contribute to the water flow.

The Winnipeg River representing about 45 percent of the total flow, Saskatchewan 26 percent to the north basin, Mississ R north basin, the Red River represents only 11 percent of the flow.

So there is only one outflow, and that's the real kicker guys and gals, is that Nelson is the only outflow on that beautiful long lake, and it is impeded by some flow because of our hydroelectricity. I am not saying it's wrong,

I am just making a point.

Well, on the phosphorus loading, research has demonstrated that about 64 percent of the total P, P being phosphorous, expelled through the Red River system is coming up the Red. 13 percent from the Winnipeg, but that's our main nitrogen source, pulp and paper. A lit bit of cottage country to the east. And, of course, we have got about five percent from the Saskatchewan river that comes out at the Grand Rapids.

Algal blooms, or phytoplankton, as the marine biologists reference, they determine that photosynthetic process need phosphorus to grow. Well, it sounds a little bit like Grade 11 or 12 science, but it's on a bigger scale.

Also on the phosphorus loading piece, in years where water levels are reduced, like last year, the photosynthetic capabilities are greatly enhanced. In other words, you've got less body mass, less waves, a little bit more of this chlorophyll A that is in large quantities. And eutrophication, which, by the way, is just diminishing the amount of moisture and adding to more solids in the scheme of things, is more prevalent.

Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium, they have done some great work. They are sponsored by a number of different sources. But again I mention this Coast Guard cutter, the great Namao, which is Cree for sturgeon, which used to be an absolutely prolific indigenous species to our lake, does research. There are 60 sample sites a year, three times a year, if they can afford it.

The cyanophyte, which is the blue/green algae, is really the one they are sort of concentrating on as kind of the culprit. This has created a reduction of our bio-diversity, and a decline in the health of the lake's ecosystem. I am probably replicating a lot of things that have been said before me, but I want this to be understood from a cottage owner's standpoint.

Oxygen levels have been dropping since 2003 in the lake. And when the algae decays, it sinks to the bottom, destroying the zoobenthos, or the live organisms that are within that mud pack, that is so much our bentonite bottom. Most people think that the pollution in the lake is that gray colour. That is just our good old waves in the lake churning up the bentonite bottom.

Research has charted since 1969. That is, by the way, when we launched the Triskele, where you saw us raising the Mizzen Mast. So the work there was done specifically on what species and crustaceans are disappearing or actually proliferating as the evolution of the different changes in phosphate loading has manifested itself. This has been creating what they call a hypoxic or "dead zone", and this is really the issue. This is what's creating our big concern in Lake Winnipeg.

The data is compelling, and we can all do something about the problem. And I stress "all", because whether it is agriculture based, like have been pinpointed over the last two or three weeks over the hearings, or it's from normal urban fertilization, run-offs, detergents or other sources, we all contribute to the Lake Winnipeg degradation. The good news is as a group we can do something about it. We can be part of the solution.

That's the little sonar group that is used on the boat just to manage the depth.

Now, there is an economic and environmental balance to everything we do. We

know that our hydroelectricity is huge. Great, great, it's one of our big economic drivers here in Manitoba. Oil in the west. We have got our hydroelectricity and alternative energies.

There is big tourism. A $20 million fisheries business that is really one of the main fabrics for the Icelandic and indigenous folks that have fishing licences. It is very, very important that we maintain that thrust, but so is environmental stewardship for our childrens' future. I don't think there is anyone in the room that disputes that.

And here I will get to my point. Let's stop casting aspersions to strictly one segment of the AG industry. Let's take a look at a little bit fresher approach. Our hog producers are among the most strident lands stewards I know. They use GPS. They use all sort of water set-back and spread regulations to do their due diligence with all of the modern technology to make sure that those nutrients are spread on land acres where it really pays back and gets absorbed by the crops.

They work with industry officials to ensure that they are doing their part to meet or,

in a lot of cases, exceed all of the guidelines set by our municipal and provincial directors when it comes to fertilization.

They recognize that agriculture is a contributor to the problem, but also are willing to be part of the solution. If I hear one more time that: Those stinking hogs have polluted the lake! I stand on a soapbox every weekend that people will listen to me and say: I love that lake. It's not just the hog industry. Part of it. It doesn't matter if it's 1 percent or if it's 15 percent. The point is we can all be part of the solution. That's my message today.

Now, on the Lake Winnipeg Research piece, there is website and general fact and data information. There is local information days at Victoria Beach, Hecla, Gimli Harbour.

I would compel anyone sitting here tonight to join me and my wife for a cup of coffee some time up at our Scuttlebutt Lodge north of Gimli. And we will go and talk to Dr. Al Christopherson and some of the marine biologists as to what they are doing. They won't cast aspersions or point fingers at the hog industry. They will say: The lake is sick and there is

something we can all do about it.

Now, Colin McNairnay is a local Manitoba Conservation officer who wrote a song to bring the lake's condition down to a child's comprehension level. I have a copy of that. I would love to play it for you as I close here. But I think what it does is it captures the essence of in '69 through '79 Lake Eerie was dying, decaying. It was hit with so much intervention from industry, it was almost beyond reproach to solve it. They got it done.

We're not dead. We're dying. And what we need to do is understand that the big, big play, as we go forward with industry, we have to recognize that whether it is the Huterian brethren, who are so well represented tonight, or independent producers, and it doesn't have to be just hogs, poultry, dairy, beef, they all have to be strident stewards of the land and work with all political persuasions as to a final fix on this lake.

So if you'll indulge me, I am going to try and get this to play. If it doesn't work, I am not going to sing it. I will give you copies of it afterwards. Keep in mind, this was written

and performed by some very, very elementary kids who need to understand. Okay, folks.

(PLAYING SONG "I LIKE FISH", BY COLIN McNAIRNAY)

MR. MACKIE: Anyway, thanks very much. I will entertain any questions. I am not selling this disc, but I will give the disc to the group. So questions from the panel?

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Mackie. Any questions?

MR. YEE: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much for your presentation.

MR. YEE: Thanks very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you state your name for the record, please?

MR. HOFER: Ben Hofer, Grosse Isle, Manitoba.

BEN HOFER, having been sworn, presents as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN: You may proceed.

MR. HOFER: Good evening, members of the Clean Environment Commission panel, ladies and gentlemen of the audience. My name is Ben Hofer. I am speaking here today as secretary of Rock Lake Huterrite Colony, Grosse Isle, Manitoba. I am also a hog producer, and I represent 44 of the 98

Manitoba colonies. My colleague, James Hofer, represents the balance. I represent about one million hogs annually.

I'm inclined to think that Hutterites, in general, pride themselves in thinking that they are good stewards of the land. Water quality is paramount to the quality of life on a Huterrite colony.

So here we are, 2007, wondering: What are we doing right, what are we doing wrong to our environment? There is an old saying that hindsight is always better than foresight. So we pick nutrient management and manure management. Let's try a little hindsight. Who could we truthfully say was the first environmentalists and nutrient manager? I would like to quote from the good book Deuteronomy 23, verse 12 and 13, the following passage:

"And God said unto his servant Moses: Speak unto the Children of Israel and thou shall have a place without a camp, thou shall have a paddle and dig their width and turn back and cover that which cometh from you so you defile not the land."

Here we are, 3,500 years later, doing the same thing to the pig manure, injecting directly into the soil. I think it's safe to say that that practice has the blessings of our creator.

In my earlier presentation, I mentioned that phosphorus is an essential element in building body tissue in both humans and animals and plant tissue. Now if you talk to most scientists and soil engineers, they will tell you phosphorus is very stable in the soil and pretty much stays where it is placed, until the next crop will uptake with its roots to produce more plant tissue. The same scientists and soil engineers will tell that you nitrogen is a mover and a migrator. I firmly believe that the only way that phosphorus from manure can ends up in a lake, in a water, stream or lake, is if the manure itself is washed into the stream, river or lake. This is highly unlikely if the manure is injected directly into the soil.

Proponents of straw-based livestock operations will often times have you believe that a straw-based livestock operation is more environmentally friendly than a liquid, manure

based system, but it has no merit. I personally asked Dr. John Gad, a hog expert from the U.K., his opinion on that matter. His answer was: There is absolutely no difference. To produce a 250-pound hog, the same amount of excrement comes out the rear end.

More hindsight, when Christopher column bus discovered America in 1492, I think it is safe to say that he found the land in a pristine state. And yet these lands were literally recovered were roaming herd of millions of buffalo, deer and antelope.

I would like to quote one of the naysayers to the hog industry at the previous presentation, if you took every hog from Manitoba and placed them nose to tail, you would have a line from here to Thunder Bay. Well, Mr. Naysayer, you forgot to do your math. Four million of these hogs leave Manitoba as babies. Your excrement pie would shrink considerably. I think I can assure you that the excrement pie from those millions of buffalo would make your pie look like a powderpuff.

I am inclined to think that people in general prefer natural fertilizer over chemical

fertilizer. As I mentioned in my earlier presentation, if you removed all of the hogs from the Province of Manitoba, not one acre would go unfertilized. If you placed those buffalo and deer and antelope nose to tail, you would almost certainly glow.

More history: As mankind settled down on the prairies and interfered more and more with the balance of nature, problems started to arise.

Next stop, silent spraying, Ritchie Carson. Now here we have a good example of due diligence, good science and good government interaction. After studying the problem, identifying the problem, action plan: DDT off the map. The DDT was getting into the food chain. And the egg shells were breaking prematurely before the hatchling was ready to emerge, problem rectified, so spraying is no longer silent.

Land use approval. It appears that as a person gets older and reaches retirement age, he or she dreams of this nice quiet place in the country, just a short drive from the big city, close enough so the grandchildren can come out for the weekends. When the land agent showed them the place, the wind was blowing from a different

direction, the land was green and the pits didn't need to be pumped, not yet, anyways.

Harvest time, fast forward, crops have to come off. Lots of trip with a grain truck over dry, dusty gravel roads. The wind is blowing towards that retirement home and all of that dust isn't doing grandma's asthma any good. The feed lots need to be cleaned and the pits pumped.

The grandchildren are out for that weekend burger bash, the steaks are in the fridge. Grandma, what's that horrible smell? Answer: The colony is cleaning out that feed lot and pumping those pits. Well, grandma, can't you do anything about it? I called the R.M. They told me that the land agent who sold you the property should have told that you there is a caveat registered on that property that says it is subject to agricultural odours. Suggestion to the panel: Subdivisions smaller than 40-acres should not be allowed. That age-old advice: If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen advice, should still be adhered to.

At this point, I would like to advise the panel that Rock Lake Colony is situated one mile from the Town of Grosse Isle, and our lagoon

has a cover on it. We file a manure management plan annually with Manitoba Conservation.

Spray drift, that's another story by itself, but that would make this presentation too lengthy.

Groundwater quality and supply. Here in the Interlake, we are sitting on a giant water aquifer. The water is found in the limestone rock. Drill a hole anywheres in the Interlake area 100 feet deep and you will have a good supply of clean water. There is a catch, however. That water is 40 to 44 grain hardness. To use that water for dishwashing and laundry, you pretty well have to soften it. How is that done? Our pioneer forefathers used wood ashes and they used ice water. When water freezes, it drops most of its minerals.

In the Interlake area, most everybody uses a commercial water softer. To regenerate a softener, it takes saltwater solution to backwash. In most cases, this happens automatically. It is my understanding that potassium chloride will do the same thing and is a little more environmentally friendly. It takes way less phosphate-laden detergent to do laundry and

dishwashing when the hardness is removed by a softener before washing. So, in essence, a softener does more good for the environment than harm, just by creating less phosphate usage. Winnipeg City water consists of approximately 12 grain hardness.

Surface water quality. There are a few colonies that are not blessed with the adequate water supply that we have here in the Interlake. Those colonies usually resort to building a larger water reservoir. The reservoir is usually replenished with spring run-off water and then processed for human consumption washing. This system has its merits because the water is snow melt, with very little, if any, hardness; therefore, requiring very little softening. In some cases chlorination is used for drinking water. In my case, here at Rock Lake, we use surface water, run-off water, for irrigation purposes only.

Soil quality. A major problem for a good number of stewards of the land is alkaline and saline soils. Now, there is a challenge. How to make that soil fertile? Here is where history can help us again. We have all heard the riddle:

Why do they have dikes in Holland? Now, the naysayers to the hog industry will tell you: It's to keep the manure in. But the real reason is to claim lane from the sea. So once the water is pumped out, they Dutch grow salt tolerant colure to remove salt from the soil. This process takes approximately ten years. This must be sustainable agriculture at its best because the Dutch have been doing this for hundreds of years.

There are as many hogs in Holland and Belgium as there are in all of Canada. Bear in mind, you can drive across Holland and Belgium in two and a half hours one way and two hours the other way. Holland and Belgium is also home to a giant dairy industry and millions of cows.

Now, at this point, I would like to tell you a little story about -- it's not in the presentation. I have a nephew who lives in Paris. He alternates between Paris and Antwerp, Belgium. And he writes software for the second biggest software company in the world, which I believe it is SEM, they call it. Microsoft is the biggest.

So he was over here for a visit just when we were installing this tarp on our lagoon. And apparently software writers have a problem

getting enough physical exercise. So he enjoyed a little physical work, so we put him on a shovel helping bury electric lines at the lagoon. So I asked him: Did you notice that you were amongst many pigs in Belgium and Holland? You are spending half your time there. Yeah, they have as many pigs in Holland and Belgium as they have in Canada, I hear. He said: Huh, I wonder where they are? That's the answer he gave me.

Odour, at Rock Lake we control odour with a negative pressure tarp cover. We find this cover very effective for odour control and very essential. Bear in mind, as I mentioned earlier, the colony is situated one mile from a residential area.

I would like to add, at this point, that we are working together with a firm called Expert Technology. A covered lagoon is a perfect opportunity to collect gases to burn off methane gases for the generation of carbon credits. Expert personnel tell me that they have one flame burning in Alberta from a lagoon. In our case, the apparatus is sitting on side, but not hooked up yet.

Disease transmission. The hog

industry today has a pretty clean record regarding major disease outbreaks. The chicken industry has seen Avian influenza. The cattle have seen BSE. The hog industry has learned early on the importance of bio-security and animal husbandry. For a hog operation to be any kind of a profit center, a disease-free status is paramount.

Climate change. Most hog operations are net users of energy. And in most cases, use fossil fuels and hydro power for energy sources. There are exceptions. One colony uses biomass flax straw. One colony in the states is successfully burning turkey manure, which is wood shaving based with 20 percent coal and 80 percent shaving mixture. A colony in Alberta is just putting the finishing touch on a four million Btu solar heating system.

If scientists and environmentalists are to be believed, all of the CO2 emissions are causing atmospheric changes in our climate. Speaking of CO2 emissions, this is one where we should give credit or credit is due. All of us old-timers will remember when the tractors of old spewed black diesel into the atmosphere under load. Today's new electronic run diesel engines

doesn't spew black smoke, even if you tried to make it do so. So hats off to the diesel manufacturers and fuel companies who have cleaned up their act by taking the sulphur out of diesel fuel and cleaned up their emissions. So where else can we eliminate CO2 emissions? The Dutch boiler manufacturer advises me that they can remove all emissions except mercury.

Wind power. Now, here is an area where we dropped the bomb. When this land was settled, quarter section by quarter section, virtually every farm had a windmill turning on it, usually for the purpose of pumping water. I spoke earlier about the Dutch and their sustainable agriculture. Well, the Dutch never dropped their wind generation technology and today are exporting that expertise to other countries. I feel quite comfortable that that clean source of energy was instrumental in developing that big sow herd in Belgium and Holland. People, in general, seem to think that to generate wind power generation you have to feed power into the hydro grid, and that is not necessarily true. Wind power can be used to heat water, which can be used later, or to produce hydrogen, or even to evaporate liquid

manure and sell the dry material to greenhouses. I remember when I arrived as a boy at Rock Lake, we had a wind power generator charging batteries.

At this point, I would like to remind the panel that industries can be here today and gone tomorrow. Winnipeg used to be home to a thriving beef packing industry, gone. A flour milling industry, gone. A brewing industry gone. Sewing and knitting industry, leaving fast. Brick manufacturing, gone. Bridge building, gone. Foundry casting building, gone. Wire manufacturing, gone. Steel for shipbuilding with Kunig Steel, gone. Boiler manufacturing, steel and iron, gone. Tannery, Dominion Tannery, gone. Cement manufacturing, gone. Co-op Implements, gone. CIL implements, gone. Sugar industry, gone. Road grading equipment manufacturing, Austin Western, gone. And our once old remaining Maple Leaf kill floor is very tired, almost gone.

So regarding the present pause in the hog industry, let's not throw the baby out with the bath water. So in closing, I would like to remind the panel that the hog industry in Manitoba is a driving force in the Manitoba economy. Thank you for listening.

And my typist added a little here: Don't work for the next election, work for the best interests of Manitoba. May the Good Lord bless you all and make good decisions for Manitoba for years to come. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hofer. And I certainly hope we can live up to that last bit of direction, making good decisions for the province.

I am just curious about one thing. You said you didn't want to lengthen your presentation, but what is a spray drift, or what do you mean by spray drift?

MR. HOFER: Well, we have quite a few horror stories to tell when it comes to spray drift. You have got a little two or four acre subdivision, with your lane road going all around it. And it is almost impossible when you are spraying with Ester, for instance. And this individual has a couple of tomato plants. And Ester is very volatile and usually they end up kaputs, so we have had quite a few of those scenarios.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.

MR. MOTHERAL: I had the same

question. But, you see, I'm a farmer, Terry isn't. I knew what a spray drift was. I know I killed my own shelter belts.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have any questions, Wayne?

MR. YEE: No, I don't.

THE CHAIRMAN: Edwin?

MR. YEE: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Hofer. Now, does anyone else wish to make a presentation this evening? It's your last chance in Stonewall. There will be 15 other opportunities in other communities, but the last chance in Stonewall.

Yes, sir.

MR. KLEINSASSER: Would questions be appropriate at the moment?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, what kind of questions, sir?

MR. KLEINSASSER: What percentage of token environment pollution comes from the hog industry fertilizer?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we are not in a position to answer that. That's not the purpose of -- the purpose of our review is not to answer

those types of questions. In fact, I am not sure that we can answer them.

MR. KLEINSASSER: Well, some people have the answers. It's half a percent. So who does the polluting?

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry?

MR. KLEINSASSER: Who does the polluting if it is only half a percent?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I am not sure if it is half a percent. But as Mr. Mackie said, we all contribute to it in many ways. Agriculture contributes to it in some ways. The City of Winnipeg, through their sewage treatment, contributes to it in ways. The use of phosphorus detergents is a significant contributor. There are many contributors to the phosphorus and nitrogen problems in our waters and, in particular, in Lake Winnipeg. But it's not any one single one.

And we're only playing a small part in trying to find the answers to that. The Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board, which has done an awful lot of research specifically in respect of Lake Winnipeg, has done a lot of research and found a lot of those answers and is working

towards cleaning up Lake Winnipeg.

But agriculture is a part. It's not a major part, but it is a part. And as Mr. Mackie said, and others have said before him, we all should be playing or doing what we can to clean up all of our waters in Manitoba.

MR. KLEINSASSER: That's strange to pick on 1 percent and the 99 percent it seems there is little done about it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I mean, I can't -- I can't speak for why the Province put in place the moratorium. That wasn't my decision. We were asked, after the moratorium was put in place, to look at issues relating to the sustainable -- the environmental sustainability of the hog industry. We're not -- our role is not to find a solution to Lake Winnipeg.

Our role is to determine if the regulatory regime that is in place in Manitoba now will ensure that the hog industry can continue in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Sir, did you want to make a presentation?

MR. R. HOFER: Yes, sir. When homesteaders settled the west --

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to come up to a mike? Well, you could sit at this one or this one up here. We do like to have a record. And that's so when we come to review what we've heard, we have a record of it. Could you introduce yourself, please, sir?

MR. R. HOFER: My name is Robert Hofer, Ninette, Manitoba. I am from the Wellwood Colony. I have a few questions, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, you can ask your questions. I can't promise that I can answer them.

MR. R. HOFER: When our homesteaders or forefathers settled the west, they broke up a lot of natural resources. The first thing that happened was massive erosion of our soils, okay? A second batch of homesteaders now are what we call settlers or homesteaders that settle around our lakes, which are our best natural resources and our rivers. The first thing they do when some cottager buys some property, he clears outs the trees, moves some soil around and builds himself a house, stirs natural resources in probably the most extreme way anybody else does.

And then we have all of the natural

soils erode into the lakes, okay, into the rivers. And as soon as you feed clear water with soils, you breed or set up an area for algae to grow, or anything to grow, because you are fertilizing the water with soil that can grow. And to me, that's our biggest problem is erosion.

All of the nutrients from millions of years of trees and growth wash into the lakes because the surrounding area around where all of the cabins are built is being disturbed. And that topsoil has been washed into the lakes. And it feeds algae and it's full of phosphate, period. All soils are full of phosphates because soils come from broken up matter of trees, leaves, whatever grows in this world.

And it's not fair to blame the farmers. Somebody should look into people that live in the cities and want to come out in the country. You know, they don't realize what they are doing to the environment. And I don't think the scientists do, too, because they are looking in their own area. They are always looking for a scapegoat, and guess who it is.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I am not really here to debate with you. But I think, in

fairness, the scientists have looked at cottage developments around lakes and urban developments around lakes as part of the problem. But that isn't what we, the Clean Environment Commission, were asked to look at. We were asked to look at the environmental sustainability of hog production.

MR. R. HOFER: It's very sad that our science is down to par and we are all doing a good job. And we're not polluting our own wells. We depend on them more than the city people do because we haven't got the distilling system like the cities do to clean the water. So we are stewards of the land, and we are very careful.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt that the vast majority of farmers are good stewards. And at the end of this review, we may well be able to say that definitively in our advice to the minister.

MR. R. HOFER: That's all I have.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your comments.

Does anybody else have a presentation they would like to make this evening? Could you introduce yourself?

MR. PENNER: My name is Calvin Penner.
THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Calvin?
THE WITNESS: Calvin Penner.
CALVIN PENNER, having been sworn, presents as follows:
MR. PENNER: Okay. I just wanted to add my two cents. And I guess come at it from the perspective of what we're doing on our farm. We are a family farm. We farm near the Town of Argyle, which isn't very far from here. In 1970 my father started this farm as a small grain and hog operation.
Today we have a 400 sow, farrow to finish, and farm 500-acres of crop land. We have three families living and working on this site, and our goal is to have a successful farm operation.
And I would like to address the issue of the sustainability of the hog industry from our farm's perspective and the measures that we take to protect our environment. To start off, we have a government certified manure storage lagoon, engineered and constructed in 1994, in accordance, at the time, with the new environmental standards. And every year, since 1994, it has been inspected

by Manitoba Conservation and is maintained according to their requests.

Also, we have participated in the Manitoba Manure Management Plan and have been part of this Environmental Program since 2000, which consists of soil testing twice a year, checking nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur levels. And the manure is tested for these nitrogens -- for these nutrients to determine the application level according to the Manitoba Manure Regulation Guidelines. All fields that we have are mapped. And environmentally sensitive areas are noted, such as low spots, sinkholes and yard sites for perimeters. We do this to observe proper set-backs according to the Manitoba guidelines. The manure application is done by professional applicators, and the use of hose injection method is used to limit the smell and the loss of nutrients.

We also monitor well water annually, testing for E. coli, coliform and nitrate levels, and these are submitted for review to Manitoba Conservation.

Also, deads are handled according to Manitoba Conservation regulations. Because we are

over 500 animal units, we do not bury our deads. We store them in cold storage and recycle them through Rosser with a once a week pick-up. The issue of smell is addressed by covering our lagoon with straw and treed shelter belts around the yard to reduce odour. We also dispose of hazardous materials, such as needles and sharps, through proper avenues, such as our vet clinic.

Conservation inspects our farm annually, following up on the Manure Management Plan, the lagoon, methods of handling deads, soil tests and water tests. We also participate in a CQA program since 19 -- no, sorry, since 2003. And we are checked annually for the humane treatment of the swine, the health of the animal, the barn and equipment integrity and safety. And feed records are checked properly for the use of medications. And if medications are used, they are done by precipitation, and this is all done through our local vet. All medications are used at the bare minimum.

In 2006, we completed an Environmental Plan Workshop, which helped us to reassess our previous environmental program and make modifications where it was needed.

Just in conclusion, I would like to say that since the time we have built our lagoon and participated in the Manure Management Program, we have not received any deficiencies from Conservation or any complaints from our neighbours.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Penner. It sounds like you are doing a very good job at being a steward of the land around your farm. Can you tell me, do you think that all of the requirements, do you feel that all of the requirements placed upon you are too onerous or do you think they are fair?

MR. PENNER: Probably if you had have asked me ten years ago, I would have said they were too onerous. But looking at them in today's perspective, I think they are fair. I think that we've adjusted to being able to do them, and I have no problem with them. I see that they are justified and I know what, you know, the purpose is behind. Them and we do agree with them and do our due diligence to uphold them.

THE CHAIRMAN: And this might not be a fair question, but do you know is all of the diligence that you're doing, is that typical of

the farmers you know?

MR. PENNER: I would say yes. I would say the lion share of producers are doing the best they can. I wouldn't venture to say all, but I bet you almost all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Wayne?

MR. MOTHERAL: A clarification point, and I have previously farmed. And I still have a farm, but I don't have any animals on my farm. What is the C2A program?

MR. PENNER: C.Q.A., it's the Canadian Quality Assurance program.

MR. MOTHERAL: Oh, C.Q.A., I'm sorry. I thought C2A was some kind of chemical. I'm sorry, my mistake, thank you. And, yes, I commend you for coming and giving your presentation. Sometimes these aren't easy things to do in a public forum. And you need to encourage others to do the same. Thank you.

MR. PENNER: Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Penner. Thanks for coming out this evening. Anybody else? Last chance for this part of the world, for Stonewall, anyway, last chance. Okay. I would like to thank you all for coming out this

evening. I would particularly like to thank those who made presentations this afternoon and this evening. All of these presentations will help us in our deliberations and the report that we have to make to the minister later on this year. Thank you and good evening.

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED AT 8:20 P.M.)

CERTIFICATE

I, LISA REID, court reporter, 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.

Lisa Reid