

HOG PRODUCERS

Alan & Laura Reavie

Like all livestock farmers, when Alan Reavie wakes up in the morning his first concern is his animals. Alan and Laura Reavie are second-generation hog farmers, operating a 400-sow farrow-to-finish operation near Rocanville. The Reavie farm also has an offshore profile: a breeding-stock contract with a company in the Netherlands.

But environmental concerns are never far from Alan's mind. When their international partner asked the Reavies to expand their production, Alan saw the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) as an opportunity to review his operation's growing environmental footprint—and perhaps get some financial assistance to expand his manure-storage capability. "We've always been very aware of our environment, and protecting the water resources and the land," he says.

Alan first heard about the EFP on the Yorkton radio station. He located the nearest workshop, in Moosomin, and signed up. "I wanted to find out if we were eligible for that kind of funding," he says, "because like anyone else, if there's an availability of income or subsidies from a government agency or other organizations, then you have to explore them to see if they're a possibility."

What is the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)?

As Alan knew, the EFP itself is not a source of funds. Producers who participate want to identify and address environmental issues in agriculture, and on their own farms. The EFP's purpose is to help farmers like Alan examine their operation in the light of environmental sustainability. It is an educational tool, not a regulatory or funding program—but it does open the door to significant shared-cost support through the Canada-Saskatchewan Farm Stewardship Program (CSFSP).

In Saskatchewan the EFP is delivered by the Provincial Council of Agricultural Development and Diversification Boards (PCAB). The EFP's five-step process helps producers assess the current and future environmental impact of their farming practices. Trained facilitators



introduce the concepts and work with farm operators to examine their operation. At home, participants use a workbook to analyze their own farm and farming practices, to identify potential environmental risks and solutions. After completing the workbook assessment, participants attend a second workshop to finalize their Environmental Farm action plan—determine the steps required to manage identified risks, and prioritize activities to resolve these risks.

A peer review committee of producers who already have endorsed Environmental Farm action plans reviews the completed action plan. Once the Peer Review Committee feels that a plan reasonably addresses the risks identified, they endorse it, allowing the producer to receive a Certificate of Endorsement from PCAB. With this certificate, producers are eligible to apply to the CSFSP for cost-shared funding to implement elements of their plan that qualify as CSFSP Beneficial Management Practices (BMP).

Staying ahead of the curve

Alan's endorsed EFP action plan qualified him to apply for shared-cost federal assistance on his project. He submitted his application, and by November had completed construction of an above-ground field storage slurry tank to handle the increased waste production.

Saskatchewan Environmental Farm Plan Testimonials

continued

Alan is an enthusiastic supporter of the EFP workshops. "It's a real learning curve for you on your own farm," he explains, adding that the process alerted him to issues he'd have to address in the future.

He continues, "I've encouraged everybody. Why not take it now? Then when there's a project that fits your operation, you don't have to scramble around and try finding a meeting—you're going to have that all in place."

As part of a regulated industry, Alan is well-versed in environmental concerns. Nevertheless, he is determined to stay ahead of the curve. "We just wanted to be a little proactive," he says, "and make sure we were positioning ourselves for something that was sustainable in the future, and not to be a detriment to any of our resources."



ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN

EFP

Sustainable Futures

Provincial Council of Agriculture Development and Diversification Boards for Saskatchewan Inc. (PCAB) is an independent non-profit organization representing grassroots agriculture in Saskatchewan. We work closely with industry and government to ensure timely and effective delivery of agriculture programs in the province. PCAB is committed to working with both government and industry to ensure a cooperative, efficient approach to agricultural program delivery.

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