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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PROVINCES CANNOT DEAL WITH CRISIS:
OTTAWA MUST**

SWIFT CURRENT, Sask.—“The Saskatchewan government made a contribution today. It has put some money on the table directly tied to the drought. Now it is the federal government’s turn,” said NFU President Stewart Wells.

Wells was commenting on the Saskatchewan government’s announcement today that it would provide up to \$25 dollars per cow to farmers in areas with ‘severe’ drought and up to \$50 per cow in loans. The announcement also contained changes to Crop Insurance.

“Twenty-five or seventy-five dollars per cow is not enough to solve the problem. But the NFU has never believed that it is up to provincial governments to solve the farm crisis or the drought problem. Only the federal government of Canada has sufficient funds to help farmers pull through this double crisis. As in the U.S., Europe, and elsewhere, it is the federal government that should have the responsibility for dealing with the global farm crisis,” said Wells.

Wells estimated that a farmer without hay may have to buy up to three tonnes per cow. At \$150/tonne, this could cost up to \$450 per cow for the coming year. This compares with a total of about \$150 in an normal year if a farmer had to buy hay, or much less if a farmer had his or her own hay. The increased cost to keep a cow this winter could be over \$300. This figure does not include additional costs to access water, feed bulls or calves, or the losses incurred in selling cattle into a depressed market. “With cost increases in excess of \$300 per cow in some areas, we know that twenty-five or seventy dollars is only a start,” said Wells.

“The NFU will continue to ask the provinces to do all they can, but the underlying problem is not just a provincial problem and it cannot be solved by provincial governments acting alone,” concluded Wells.

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