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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

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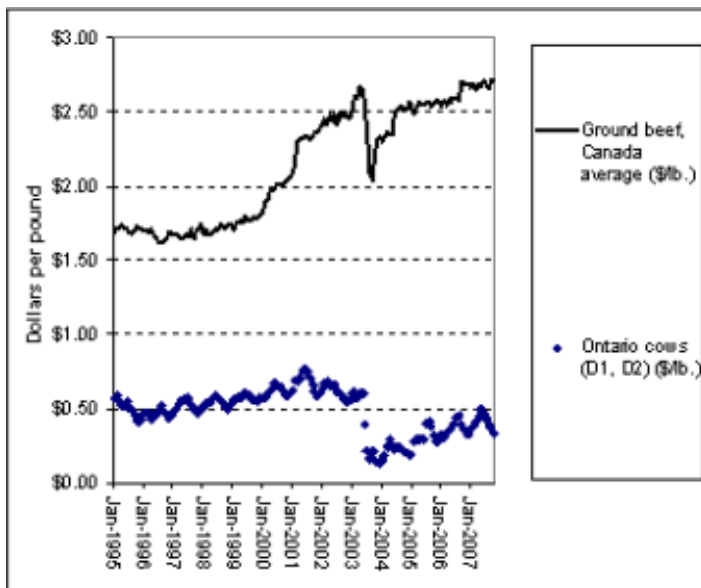
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LIVESTOCK PRICE CRASH A RESULT OF DYSFUNCTIONAL MARKETPLACE

Livestock farmers across Canada have been hit hard by a collapse in returns for beef and pork at the farm gate, even though prices paid by consumers at the retail level are higher than ever. It's a situation that requires both short-term intervention and long-term solutions, says the President of the National Farmers Union (NFU).

Stewart Wells says the dysfunctional livestock marketplace is the result of a situation where a handful of large corporations dominate the industry. In fact, a single company, Cargill, owns half the packing capacity in Canada and is able to heavily influence prices at both the farm gate and at the wholesale/retail level. A rising Canadian dollar is just a small factor in this larger equation.

“The farmers’ share of the cow has fallen sharply in the past decade,” stated Wells. “In the mid-1990s, farmers got 60 cents a pound for beef, while packers and retailers took a dollar. Now farmers get 35 cents and packers/retailers get almost \$2.50 a pound.”



“Pork is no different; Since 1976 the retail price of pork chops has risen from just under \$2 a pound to between \$4 and \$5. Meanwhile the dressed hog price received by farmers has declined.”

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