

National Office  
2717 Wentz Ave.  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
S7K 4B6  
Tel (306) 652-9465  
Fax (306) 664-6226  
E-Mail: nfu@nfu.ca



**national farmers union**  
*In Union Is Strength*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NOVEMBER 29, 2007**

### **THE LIVESTOCK CRISIS: ONE FARMER'S STORY**

**FERINTOSH, Alta.**—Dale Fankhanel and his son raise pigs on their Alberta farm. They recently shipped pigs to market and were shocked and angered by the low prices they received. In some cases the price was as low as 2¢ per pound.

Five sows sold for an average of \$46.48 per pig—about 11¢ per pound. Ten feeder pigs sold for an average of \$39.84—16¢ per pound. Grocery store bacon and pork chops sell for about \$5.00 per pound.

The Fankhanel's biggest disappointment, however, was when they saw their cheque for a 700 pound boar—just \$14.00. “The packers and grocery stores will turn that boar into 500 pounds of sausage and sell it for \$3.00 per pound. Consumers will pay \$1,500.00 for that pig, but I got only \$14.00,” said Dale Fankhanel.

The story gets worse. Deducted from the Fankhanel's final payment for that boar was \$10.60 for trucking and \$1.06 in levies to the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation. After deductions, Dale and his son were left with just \$2.34.

“The meat that goes into making \$3-a-pound sausage is being stolen from farmers for *one-third of one penny* per pound. Virtually 100% of the money that consumers pay at the grocery-store till goes to packers and retailers. These pirates are destroying our family farms. That's got to stop,” said Fankhanel.

Fankhanel points out farmers have few options in the face of low prices. “It's hard to hold back a hog from market when prices plummet—the hog keeps eating, and that costs money. Finding alternative markets isn't easy either; the next major packing plant is often a thousand miles away. Further, the price collapse is nation-wide; shipping the hog to the next province isn't likely to yield a higher price. Lack of competition among packers means lack of options for farmers,” he said.

Fankhanel suggested some solutions: “The independent farmers raising cattle and hogs are in crisis. We need immediate short-term aid in order to save our farms. But aid isn't enough. We need to *fix* the problem. The federal government must force packers and retailers to open their books so we can see who's pocketing the tens-of-billions of dollars Canadians spend each year on meat. And we need a full inquiry—the politicians need to come out to the country to hear from the farmers who are the victims of this crisis.”

— 30 —

For More Information:

Dale Fankhanel, Farmer and NFU Board member: (780) 877-2280

Darrin Qualman, Director of Research: (306) 652-9465

