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To all Alberta Lamb Producers

**Alberta Lamb Producers** has been representing producers and providing services to the Alberta sheep industry since 1972. You elect and authorise a board of producers to direct your organisation for the benefit of the industry; all members are encouraged to provide input and to serve as directors. Alberta Lamb Producers provides a united voice for all industry members to government, the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency and other industry groups. Industry input is vital to ensure that new programs are practical, beneficial and affordable for all sectors of industry. Alberta Lamb Producers is funded by a service charge (check-off) per sheep/lamb produced in Alberta. Check-off is also paid on each pound of wool sold in Alberta.

Check-off dollars are very important to a producer group, especially to our relatively small but expanding and profitable livestock sector. Check-off maintains the infrastructure and operations of Alberta Lamb Producers and also leverages government funding programs to assist with development of the sheep industry. Over the last five years, each producer check-off dollar has leveraged an additional \$3 of external funding. In recent years, check-off plus this outside funding has been used to undertake many valuable projects, such as:

- **Producer Communication and Education** on animal health, nutrition, reproduction, humane handling, wool etc. through newsletters, websites etc
- **Membership of Canadian Sheep Federation** to enable concerns to be addressed nationally and resources provided
- **Negotiation with government** to ensure sheep producers are included in financial benefit programs eg BSE compensation; AB Farm Recovery Program; Advance Payment Program
- **Promotion** of lamb at consumer shows, & distribution of recipes etc.
- **Research Projects**, such as Building Better Lambs, The Lakeland Carcass Sire Project, the Alberta Scrapie Surveillance and Genotyping Program and most recently year 3 of the Lamb Traceability Pilot Project
- **And many other projects which are of benefit to the industry and individual producers alike**

We are very disappointed that the Alberta government has chosen to mandate that check off should be refundable for four commissions in Bill 43, without industry consultation. You have successfully directed your organisation, Alberta Lamb Producers, to demonstrate good governance; develop a new business plan aligned with ALMA and enable the creation of many

**“A flock in every field and lamb on every plate”**

producer resources and research projects for the benefit of the whole industry. The Bill 43 changes do not make sense at a time when governments are facing severe budgetary constraints and are looking to industry to provide more funding for activities as well as implementation of mandatory programs. Industry ownership is critical to ensure the success of these programs.

The introduction of Bill 43, mandating that check off is refundable, could challenge Alberta Lamb Producers' financial stability and infrastructure. If passed, check off will become refundable to sheep producers from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2010. Is it fair that those industry stakeholders who pay their check off should be providing benefits for those who choose not to support their industry? If check off revenue is reduced, the amount of both industry and external funding that is available will severely limit the progress of this expanding industry. As a democratic organization run by producers, for producers, Alberta Lamb Producers already provides every member with an opportunity to have a positive influence on the organisation.

We look forward to ensuring our producers are positioned to grow and capitalize on expanding market demands and opportunities. To accomplish that, Alberta Lamb Producers must remain a strong and viable organization. It is a central point of contact for all industry participants, and it should appropriately continue to develop as the hub that connects all stakeholders.

For all the reasons outlined above; because of our track record and the opportunities the industry has, we are trusting that all sheep producers in Alberta will continue to invest in their industry through continued participation and membership of Alberta Lamb Producers.

Contact your Alberta Lamb Producers zone director if you have questions or comments

Zone 1 – Norine Moore, 403 549 2464 [wnsheep@xplornet.com](mailto:wnsheep@xplornet.com)

Zone 2 – John Haarman, 403 381 4881 [couleewiewtexel@caylix.com](mailto:couleewiewtexel@caylix.com)

Zone 3 – Kathy Parker, 403 443 7220 [parkerstockfarm@xplornet.com](mailto:parkerstockfarm@xplornet.com)

Zone 4 – Irene Rutledge, 403 577 2382 [prutledge@xplornet.com](mailto:prutledge@xplornet.com)

Zone 5 – vacant – contact the office for further information

Zone 6 – Ronald den Broeder, 780 674 4050 [broeder@eronafarms.ca](mailto:broeder@eronafarms.ca)

Zone 7 – Phil Kolodychuk 780 835 3319 [philk@abnorth.ca](mailto:philk@abnorth.ca)

Or the office on Rite (310-0000) 403 948 8533 [info@ablamb.ca](mailto:info@ablamb.ca) Monday – Thursday

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