

PETITION TO THE HONOURABLE MARK HOLLAND, MINISTER OF HEALTH

We, the undersigned residents of the Province of Saskatchewan, draw the attention of the Minister of Health to the following:

WHEREAS:

- The Prairie landscape is thoroughly infested with Richardson’s Ground Squirrels (RGS) and are in desperate need of an undisputable and sustainable pest management strategy;
- It is imperative that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) reevaluate the decision to cancel the use of strychnine for the control of RGS;
- RGS meet the definition of an agricultural pest under the “*Pest Control Products Act*” due to the substantial damage inflicted on crops, livestock and equipment resulting in economic losses for farmers and ranchers;
- No adequate alternative to strychnine for controlling the RGS population is available;
- In using alternatives to strychnine namely chlorophacinone, diphacinone, zinc phosphide, aluminum phosphide, white mustard seed powder and sodium alpha-olefin sulfonate have not been found effective by actual users, and are more labour intensive and expensive than strychnine;
- The practices recommended by the Integrated Pest Management have not been adopted due to the lack of effectiveness and/or practicality;
- Health Canada recognized the value of strychnine because it is easy to use, cost effective and manages RGS in a single feeding;
- The use of bait stations as a method of application of strychnine, is an effective and responsible way of treating infestations of RGS and significantly reducing the rate of secondary poisonings;
- A certification (license to apply strychnine) requirement for the application of strychnine will educate users on proper procedures;
- Consistent compliance monitoring by PMRA (or equivalent), will result in better adherence to application regulations; and
- Non-compliance of the proper use of strychnine will result in a fine and/or ban of acquiring strychnine.

THEREFORE: we, the undersigned residents of the Province of Saskatchewan, call upon the Minister of Health and Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency to collaborate with rural producers and ranchers in the Prairie Provinces to restructure the guidelines and reinstate the use of strychnine to control mass populations of RDS while meeting current standards for environmental protection.

Signatures

*(sign your name, do not print)*

Address

*(provide your city, province, or postal code)*

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