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# News Release

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Saskatchewan

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## **INCREASED FUNDING FOR AGRICULTURE IN 2011-12**

Record Crop Insurance coverage and funding in the 2011-12 Agriculture budget will help protect Saskatchewan producers against risks such as excess moisture.

The Government of Saskatchewan has increased its Agriculture budget by \$32 million to \$418 million in 2011-12. This is the second largest Agriculture budget ever announced in the province's history, next to 2009-10. More than three quarters of this year's budget will fully fund business risk management programs including Crop Insurance, AgriStability and AgriInvest.

"Our government is continuing to work to meet the needs of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers, and this budget is another step in that direction," Agriculture Minister Bob Bjornerud said. "With record coverage and funding for Crop Insurance, an increased Unseeded Acreage Benefit and a commitment to fully funding all agriculture programs up front, producers can head into the upcoming growing season knowing this government will stand behind them."

Bjornerud said the government will be leaving more money in the hands of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers by implementing phase two of its education property tax reduction plan, which will reduce education property tax rates by 80 per cent on agricultural land compared to 2007. This is the largest education tax reduction in the province's history. This year, the mill rate will be reduced from 7.08 to 3.91 on agricultural land.

"For too long, Saskatchewan farm and ranch families were forced to shoulder an unfair burden of education funding through property tax on their farm and ranch land," Bjornerud said. "Our government committed to creating a fairer balance by reducing this tax burden, and today we have kept that promise."

The 2011-12 Agriculture budget also includes expanded agricultural extension services with the opening of seven new satellite offices in Meadow Lake, Lloydminster, Assiniboia, Moosomin, Estevan, Shaunavon and Wadena. This is a two-year pilot project.

As part of the Enterprise Saskatchewan budget, the provincial government introduced the Saskatchewan Renewable Diesel Program, which includes a two per cent renewable diesel mandate beginning in July, 2012. The program also includes a five year incentive, which provides 13 cents per litre for renewable diesel produced and sold in Saskatchewan.

In addition, the provincial government is increasing funding for research, rat control and the Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The provincial government will continue to provide funding for the Crown Land Sale Program, the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, the Gopher Control Rebate Program, irrigation infrastructure, the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program, the Farm Business Development Initiative and other programs to benefit producers.

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