



ProteinMB

MANITOBA'S SUSTAINABLE
PROTEIN ADVANTAGE

PROTEINMB WATER & WASTEWATER FORUM WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

[ProteinMB](#) is focused on facilitating protein industry growth through value chain collaboration, providing representation and advocacy for the sector, measuring sustainability performance, supporting research and knowledge translation, and industry promotion and marketing. ProteinMB engages with the protein sector across 10 strategic areas outlined in the [Manitoba Protein Advantage Strategy \(MPAS\) action plan](#).

The objective of the ProteinMB Water and Wastewater Forum was to review the results of the wastewater processing study carried out for ProteinMB, bring protein processors together to network, understand water issue and opportunities, and develop advocacy, events or services based on industry needs.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

ProteinMB held a Water and Wastewater Forum on June 27, 2024, at the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters office in Winnipeg. Attendance at the forum included 13 representatives from Manitoba's protein industry, WSP and the Government of Manitoba. Highlights from the WSP report were shared. Manitoba Agriculture provided information on funding opportunities for actioning the next steps of the report. Industry provided feedback and insights on water and wastewater opportunities impacting their growth. This document provides a summary of feedback received from protein industry participants.

WHAT WE HEARD

OPPORTUNITY FOR MANITOBA

The increasing demand for meat and high-quality protein is a great opportunity for Manitoba as a low-cost jurisdiction in North America. Collaboration is currently limited among Manitoba protein companies. There is an opportunity for more sharing, learning and jointly initiating activities or advocating for initiatives that would benefit multiple companies.

NEED FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER CAPACITY

The following water and wastewater capacity issues were identified:

Water Sources

- Some manufacturers have issues with lack of water and there are limitations around what is known about where there is ground water available.
- Organizations strive to reduce the need for water and reduce or eliminate wastewater. Participants expressed that water is the bigger issue and that water re-use is happening in other provinces.
- There is a need for more waters sources in Manitoba with increased industry growth and the impacts of climate change.

Slow Progress Addressing Issues

- Cited municipalities have made efforts to address water issues, but the slow progress has resulted in delayed progress in growing business. Future bottlenecks in capacity are anticipated as well.
- There is a waitlist to access approvals for retention ponds to help retain water for protein processing

Discharge Allowances

- Discharge allowance limitations is leading one processor to have to haul away excess water at a significant cost.

Water Quality

- Water quality needs to be addressed. A protein processor needs to invest money to purify the water due to its high mineral content. Reverse osmosis is being considered.

Infrastructure Funding

- Municipalities do not have funding infrastructure available. Money is needed for infrastructure updates to have the capacity required.

Regulatory Environment

- Forum participants expressed issues with provincial approvals regarding timelines and regulatory timelines. Noting provincial timelines are very delayed and do not align with industry needs, firm milestones are not available. This contrasts with other jurisdictions with much shorter approval cycles and certainty. Examples include North & South Dakota and Alberta.

- Nitrogen Restrictions can be problematic for protein processors. Participants expressed challenges with Canadian Food Inspection Agency when dealing with areas with food contact and restrictive requirements and poor service timelines related to regulation and wastewater and food safety issues. Provincial inspection and CFIA processes were identified as a barrier to growth. Overly regulated requirements exist related to the use of waste products so that dry waste which could be used as feed is not accepted. Currently it takes longer to obtain acceptance for feed inputs than it does for human consumption food.

Financial

Manitoba competes with other jurisdictions to secure investments and water is a barrier due to uncertainty around regulatory approvals. When competing globally and in North America for capital investment there is a high risk to invest before indication of approval. It was noted that Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP) funding is available.

NEXT STEPS

Thank you to all who participated in the forum. Feedback provided will inform ProteinMB collaborations. ProteinMB is launching Sustainable Protein Consortiums to continue to align the industry, share best practice, help solve problems and pursue collaborative opportunities. [Become a ProteinMB associate](#) to stay informed and receive updates of opportunities to engage with ProteinMB.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this report, please contact ProteinMB at info@ProteinMB.ca.



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