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## New farm building code worries pork producers

By CBC News  
CBC News

*A new provincial farm building code could include requirements for sprinkler systems, firewalls and alarms in new and renovated barns housing animals.*

Manitoba hog producers say farm building code changes being pushed by animal rights groups could put the industry out of business.

The code could include requirements for sprinkler systems, firewalls and alarms in new and renovated barns housing animals.

The activist group Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Food Animals supports stricter industry-wide building codes, saying thousands of animals have died over the years in hog barn fires.

But while the animal rights group says contemplated changes to the code don't go far enough - Manitoba's hog producers say while they're to make changes, they also have to keep an eye on costs.

"If we put the cost too high then you're going to put the producers out of business," said Manitoba Pork Council chairman Karl Kynoch.


Activists say thousands of hogs and other animals are at risk under existing building standards. Current building codes fail to take into account the fact that many farms have evolved from small-family owned businesses to larger industrial-type operations, they argue.

"We have major concerns about the barn fires in Manitoba," said animal rights spokesman Twyla Francois. "What we are calling for is that higher standards be put in place."

Manitoba's Fire Commissioner Chris Jones also has concerns about agricultural buildings, especially industrial-sized barns which can house thousands of animals. "We are taking steps to ensure in the future that new buildings or buildings undergoing major renovations meet a minimum standard of code," he said.

But the activist group wants any new code to cover all existing farms, forcing owners to retrofit with sprinkler systems, better alarms and firewalls.

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