

Checklist for a meaningful and Comprehensive BRM Review

Conditions	Description
<p>Analyzing the changing face of farm businesses.</p>	<p>We believe that the program review documents do not adequately consider the changing nature of farming in the 21st century. The following three examples highlight a few of factors affecting the larger context of farming that we believe are not received adequate consideration inside of the current review process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceleration of the size of farm and decrease in the number of farms – what does this mean for existing programs if farms are getting bigger? How does this create new opportunity? What risks does this stratification entail? • Increasing levels of debt – how do rising debt levels impact the relationship with risk or is it a new function of the changing size of farm? • Acceleration of costs – inputs, fuel and labour costs are increasing across the country. How does this affect the farm business? What is the relationship with size of farm and debt levels? What risks could this create in an environment of rising interest rates?
<p>Useful farm-level outcomes and performance measures.</p>	<p>The program review documents focus exclusively on transactional criteria, looking at existing programs without adequately considering underlying policy outcomes. The limited program review also appears to rely heavily on averages, which do not account for the specific, highly variable impacts and outcomes of farming (e.g. by size, region, commodity).</p> <p>We believe that a comprehensive review must focus on these variable farm-level outcomes rather than transactional criteria and averages. While we acknowledge the need to be prudent with public money, we believe the current criteria will insufficiently assess program outcomes.</p>
<p>Maximizing producer participation and commitment.</p>	<p>With falling participation rates, current programming is demonstrably failing at securing producer buy-in. We need a comprehensive policy review to consider the root causes of low participation, without assuming that market declines will restore faith in programs that continue to lack credibility with producers.</p> <p>The review needs to closely consider the kinds of principles that need to be incorporated into potential programming reform to reverse these trends and ultimately lead to better buy-in from farmers across the country.</p>
<p>Program flexibility & delivery options.</p>	<p>The limited program review does not truly consider alternatives to the existing programs, unduly relying on existing evaluation criteria to determine program effectiveness without examining innovative approaches to program delivery. Without a broader examination of possible program options, the review is inherently limited to a narrow scope of possibilities.</p>
<p>Ongoing industry engagement.</p>	<p>While we strongly support your government in its efforts to engage with industry, we believe greater engagement and participation of industry organizations and representatives must be a feature of a comprehensive review. To this end, we believe that further engagement must reflect the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct consultation with producer associations throughout the review, including specific consultations on each of the 5 focal areas laid out in the draft analytical plan provided to the Expert Advisory Panel; • Publication of the Expert Advisory Panel’s report in June 2017, prior to the July FPT Ministerial meeting, allowing industry to assess and provide feedback on the Panel’s recommendations; and • Coinciding with release of this report, analyses presented to the Panel throughout their deliberations must be made publicly available.