



## **PRAIRIE RESIDENTS MOST CONFIDENT ABOUT JOB SECURITY AND NATIONAL ECONOMY, ACCORDING TO RBC CANADIAN CONSUMER OUTLOOK**

**TORONTO, March 1, 2010** —The February *RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook* report finds that Manitoba and Saskatchewan residents have the lowest job anxiety in Canada, dropping to 13 per cent, down from 19 per cent in January, and well below the national average of 25 per cent.

Not surprisingly, the survey also finds that Prairie residents are the most optimistic when it comes to the current national economy, with 73 per cent rating it as good, up five percentage points from last month and well above the national average of 53 per cent. Additionally, 67 per cent of Saskatchewan and Manitoba residents believe Canada's economy will improve over the next year, a sharp rise from 51 per cent in January and above the national average of 62 per cent. Half of Prairie residents (50 per cent) believe the national economy will improve over the next three months, rising 20 per cent from January and above the national average of 41 per cent.

"Prairie residents have maintained their sunny outlook in one of the coldest months of the year," said Rob Johnston, regional president, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and North Western Ontario, RBC. "When things are going well, it's a great time to focus on paying down debt and to build a solid financial plan will help you stay financially secure."

Regional highlights include:

- **Local Economy:** Four-in-10 residents of Manitoba and Saskatchewan (40 per cent) expect the local economy to improve in the next three months, a rise of 17 percentage points from January and compared to 30 per cent nationally.

- **Personal Financial Situation (Overall):** Twenty-two per cent of Prairie residents indicate that their financial situation improved over the last three months, down from 31 per cent in January and in line with the national average of 21 per cent. However, 35 per cent of respondents from Manitoba and Saskatchewan expect their financial situation to improve in the next three months, compared to the national average of 30 per cent. Close to half of Prairie respondents (49 per cent) believe their personal financial situation will improve over the next year, above the national average of 45 per cent.

“The economies of Saskatchewan and Manitoba are showing signs of strengthening and are on track to expand at relatively fast clips this year,” said Robert Hogue, senior economist, RBC. “Saskatchewan’s economy is expected to grow by 3.9 per cent in 2010 and our forecast for Manitoba’s real GDP growth is 3.2 per cent in 2010.”

### **About The *RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index***

The *RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index*, benchmarked as of November 2009, is based on the results of an online survey of 1,064 Canadians, ages 18 and over, conducted by Ipsos Reid between February 9 and 12, 2010. This data represents the most timely and comprehensive snapshot of consumer attitudes regarding their finances and the economy in Canada. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample’s composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100 per cent response rate would have an estimated margin of error of  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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