



WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

A strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in Western Canada

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For Immediate Release

WBGA APPLAUD FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT OF MALT BARLEY INDUSTRY

Airdrie, Alberta, October 11, 2012 - The Federal government announced \$525,000 of government funding from the AgriMarketing Program for Canada's malt barley industry yesterday. "This is great news for farmers and the industry," says Doug Robertson, President of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA). "The three organizations that will benefit from this funding - The Malting Industry Association of Canada (MIAC), the Canadian Malt Barley Technical Centre (CMBTC), and the Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute (BMBRI) are an important asset to our domestic malting industry in Canada. Their continued work helps the Canadian domestic malt and brewing industry compete with the rest of the world, and that is beneficial for farmers. The more value-added products we can ship rather than raw grain products, provides more jobs and increased value for the Canadian economy."

This investment is part of an \$88 million overall investment provided by the AgriMarketing Program under the Growing Forward Plan. The intention of the federal government program is to encourage agriculture industries to invest in international market development, trade advocacy, and product development and awareness. Canadian malt and malting barley exports in 2011 were valued at over \$600 million. This announcement is especially timely with the new open market for cereal grains which began August 1, 2012.

"We worked long and hard for that open market for our grain," says Martin Hall, WBGA Vice-President, "and we want to make sure that our domestic malting and brewing industry continues to thrive as they compete in the world market. Farmers have more choices where to sell their grain now, and we need to support the local industry, so it's a positive move for the federal government to invest in organizations that make it stronger and more competitive."

Doug Robertson agrees, "Investment in innovation, better competitive strategies and market development by the federal government under this new program is money well spent. Our competitors especially in Australia have been doing it for years and it has paid big dividends to their industry. We need a strong domestic malting and brewing industry and more value adding for our raw products. Canada has got to start getting more value out of our raw resources before they are exported, and strong domestic value-adding is a crucial way to achieve that goal."

Western Barley Growers Association is a strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in Western Canada.

For further comment, please contact:

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