



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 opposes eastern Canada's push to save the Canadian Wheat Board

November 15, 2007 ~ Airdrie, AB: A full day meeting is planned on how to save the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) in Regina, Saskatchewan on November 17, 2007. The meeting is organized primarily by non-farmer interests. In attendance will be the National Farmers Union, L'Union des Producteurs Agricoles (UPA), Liberal and New Democrat members of Parliament, Canadian labor union representatives and the Friends of the CWB.

"Clearly it appears that the interest to save the CWB is more of a concern to parties that are not regulated to utilize the CWB" states Jeff Nielsen, President of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA). "What right, does a farmer who belongs to the UPA from Quebec have to tell me how I manage my business and what sound financial decisions would best benefit my farm?"

The goal of this meeting as stated in the agenda is to:

Delay a federal election – participants recognize that if the Progressive Conservative party receives a clear majority in the next federal election, changes to the CWB will be swift.

Enlist allies of monopolies outside of agriculture

Ensure supply management across Canada is in support of the CWB

Ensure Canada's labor unions support the CWB

Enlist media support

"By enrolling supply manage sectors into a save the CWB campaign is totally off base" continues Nielsen. "Supply management is the mechanism by which milk, poultry and egg farmers in Canada are able to set prices and supply our domestic market; it is not for exports. How can one compare this sector to a grain and oilseed sector that is driven by exports from the day western Canada was opened up to crop production?"

"Being known as the breadbasket to the world, our cereal and oilseed crop production in Western Canada has always been driven by exports. Although our wheat and malt barley meet the top demands of our customers worldwide, acreage has been steadily declining in these crops as producers are growing other commodities where they have control over their marketing and profitability" states Nielsen.

WBGA encourages all farmers to contact your Member of Parliament and tell them its time to move forward with comprehensive reforms to the CWB Act and allow us total marketing choice. It is time for us, as producers and business owners to take command of our future

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