

October 2, 2007

Alberta continues fight for farmers' rights

Province will also support barley group's court application against CWB case

Edmonton... The Government of Alberta is taking action to help secure marketing choice for the province's barley producers by applying for intervener status in an upcoming federal court appeal.

"Alberta's barley producers have told us that they want to be able to market their barley to anyone they choose, including the Canadian Wheat Board," said George Groeneveld, Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Food. "Our government will remain in the fight until this is settled."

Producers clearly want more competitive options to maximize their barley marketing opportunities. "This issue is about a fundamental Canadian right – freedom of choice," Groeneveld added.

The Western Barley Growers Association will also apply for intervention. The group will receive financial assistance from the Government of Alberta for legal costs – up to \$50,000 upon receipt of their invoices.

"On behalf of the members of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) and all barley producers that support choice marketing, I'd like to thank Minister Groeneveld and the Government of Alberta for this tremendous support," said Jeff Nielsen, President WBGA.

On July 31, the Federal Court ruled that the Canadian government could not remove barley and barley products from the single desk marketing authority of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) by regulatory amendments, but would have to go to parliament to do so. Alberta Agriculture and Food has filed a motion with the Federal Court of Appeal to request intervener status in the federal government's appeal of the Federal Court's ruling.

The Government of Manitoba has filed motions to request intervener status in support of the CWB.

This action supports Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to build a stronger Alberta. Other priorities for the government are to govern with integrity and transparency, manage growth pressures, improve Albertan's quality of life and promote safe and secure communities.

- 30 -

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