



For Immediate Release

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Wheat Growers Enjoy Successful Convention

Members of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association enjoyed an informative and invigorating convention February 16-18 in Canmore, Alberta, as the Wheat Growers celebrated 35 years of putting forward farmer-driven policy solutions.

The convention featured 38 speakers on a wide range of topics including grain transportation, grain grading and marketing, safety nets, research, bio-fuels, biotech and international trade. Over 200 farmers and industry representatives registered for the conference, which was held jointly with the Western Barley Growers Association.

Among the presenters were Steve Verheul, Canada's chief agricultural trade negotiator; Mayo Schmidt, CEO of SWP; Adrian Measner, President and CEO of CWB; Chris Hamblin, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Grain Commission; Lorne Hepworth, President of CropLife Canada; and Bruce Webster, past Chair of the Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board (OWPMB).

Mr. Webster gave a first-hand account of the opportunities and benefits that Ontario wheat farmers are capturing ever since the OWPMB gave up its monopoly two years ago.

Delegates also debated over 20 resolutions. Highlights of these include:

- A renewed call for marketing choice.
- Endorsement of the Farmer-Industry Partnership proposal with respect to the disposition of the federal hopper car fleet.
- Support for increased public funding of plant research.
- Elimination of the deposit requirement under CAIS.
- Support for greater trade liberalization including a call for the Canadian government to reach a final WTO agreement as quickly as possible.
- An independent review of the CWB's governance and election procedures.
- Removal of farmland as a base for education taxes.
- Changes to Canada's food aid sourcing rules that would allow the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to leverage contributions more effectively.

A full set of the Wheat Growers resolutions will soon be posted on the Association's website at www.wheatgrowers.ca. Several of the convention presentations will also be posted on the Wheat Grower website.

"We are very pleased with the success of the convention," says Wheat Grower President Cheryl Jolly. "The information we gathered and the exchange of views by all participants will help to ensure the Wheat Growers become an even stronger voice for prairie farmers."

The WCWGA, an independent producer organization, has spent 35 years bringing forth innovative farmer-driven solutions and will continue to lobby on behalf of forward thinking, progressive producers in an effort to make farming sustainable and profitable.

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Innovative, farmer-driven solutions.