



For Immediate Release

January 27, 2005

Wheat Growers Propose Positive Farm Income Solutions

Declining farm incomes, rural depopulation and low farm prices . . . are there solutions? The Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association (WCWGA) believes there are, and presented those solutions to the federal government last week, as part of the government's consultative process on farm income. The consultative process is being led by MP Wayne Easter, Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture and Agri-Food. At separate hearings in Calgary, Saskatoon and Brandon, the Wheat Growers presented a brief that outlined several concrete steps the Canadian government could take to improve farm incomes.

"The Wheat Growers are optimistic about the future profitability of farming," says Cherilyn Jolly, President of the WCWGA. "However farmers and rural communities cannot reach their full potential without significant and positive changes in federal farm policy."

The WCWGA is calling on the federal government to undertake several initiatives, such as reducing tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, giving farmers greater opportunities to add value, and reducing the regulatory and tax burden that farmers face. Regulation harmonization with the US is another area that needs to be improved.

"Regulations should not be designed to re-engineer the marketplace," says Jolly. "We need compatibility in regulatory policy, particularly with the US, in the areas of seed, chemicals and fertilizers, so we can avoid costly trade conflicts that negatively affect farm income."

The Wheat Growers also say a commitment by the Federal Government to education as well as an improved fiscal framework for private sector research and development are crucial elements.

"We are convinced farm incomes can be enhanced if farmers are given greater freedom to operate, market, and add value, and if the tax and regulatory burden is reduced," says Jolly.

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.