



For Immediate Release

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Wheat Growers Pleased with Progress at CWB Roundtable Meeting

The Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association is pleased to see the progress achieved at yesterday's Roundtable meeting in Saskatoon concerning the future structure and role of the Canadian Wheat Board in a market choice environment.

The Wheat Growers were among 25 individuals and organizations who met with federal Agriculture Minister Chuck Strahl and Parliamentary Secretary David Anderson to put forward proposals on how to implement marketing choice for western Canadian wheat and barley growers.

"It was a constructive meeting," says Mike Bast, Chair of the Wheat Growers. "Everyone brought a different perspective to the table however there was good consensus in a number of key areas."

One of the more commonly held views was that the CWB and those farmers who choose to use it should ultimately determine how the CWB should structure and position itself in a market choice environment. "The CWB could evolve into a voluntary marketing board, a new generation co-op, a conventional shareholder company or whatever ownership and governance model the CWB and its farmer 'owners' believe will best meet its business strategy," says Bast.

Participants at the meeting noted that hog marketing boards in the three prairie provinces and the wheat marketing board in Ontario have successfully transformed from compulsory institutions to voluntary marketing enterprises. "We are convinced that with the right people and the right attitude, the CWB can also make a successful transition to a voluntary marketing enterprise" says Cheryl Jolly-Nagel, President of the Wheat Growers.

The majority of roundtable participants also agreed the CWB should be given every opportunity to succeed in a commercial environment. This means the federal government should ensure legislation does not confer any special advantages to the CWB nor should it impose any special disadvantages relative to other competitors in the marketplace.

"We're pleased to see the government remains firmly committed to following through on its campaign promise to implement marketing choice," says Jolly-Nagel. "We look forward to the day when we are each free to sell our property to whomever we please."

The WCWGA, an independent producer organization, has spent 36 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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For further comment, please contact:

Mike Bast
Chair
WCWGA
Home: (204) 255-6187

Cheryl Jolly-Nagel
President
WCWGA
Cell: (306) 354-7368

Innovative, farmer-driven solutions.