



For Immediate Release

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Wheat Growers Encouraged by Marketing Choice Report

The Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association supports most of the recommendations contained in a report on the July 27 roundtable meeting held by the federal government to discuss options for the implementation of marketing choice for wheat and barley.

“The report provides some good recommendations for moving forward,” says Cherilyn Jolly-Nagel, President of the Wheat Growers. “The federal government now needs to show leadership and develop concrete steps and a timeline for giving western farmers the freedom to sell our wheat and barley to whomever we please.”

The report calls on the federal government to create a technical task force and to establish a time-frame for the implementation of marketing choice. The report also sets out some principles concerning how a voluntary Canadian Wheat Board can be an effective player within a commercial, competitive marketplace. For example, the report notes how the CWB should be allowed to develop its own business strategy and structure in a way that it believes will best serve farmers in a market choice environment.

The Wheat Growers urge the federal government to immediately strike an implementation task force, including representation from farmers, industry and the CWB, so transition details can be worked out.

The Wheat Growers note that every day marketing choice is delayed translates into lost profit opportunities for farmers and a loss of value-added investment on the prairies.

“We’re seeing tremendous private investment in canola and other crops, and yet investment in wheat and barley lags behind,” says Jolly-Nagel. “Moving to a market choice environment will create more profitable pricing opportunities for farmers and be a catalyst for more wheat and barley processing in western Canada.”

The Wheat Growers also believe introduction of marketing choice will encourage greater investment in wheat and barley variety development, as plant breeders and developers will have much higher assurance that new varieties can be successfully introduced to the marketplace.

“We believe implementing marketing choice represents a great opportunity to reverse the downward trend in wheat acreage,” says Jolly-Nagel. “We can’t keep relying on other crops to pay the bills. It is time for wheat to pull its weight, and we believe a voluntary CWB will play a key role in helping to make that happen.”

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:

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