



*For Immediate Release*

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## **Wheat Growers Look Forward to a Free Market in Barley**

The Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association is pleased and excited about the federal government's announcement to implement a free market in barley on August 1, 2007.

"Farmers can look forward to a new era of stronger prices for barley," says Cherilyn Jolly-Nagel, President of the Wheat Growers. "We've already seen barley prices strengthen in anticipation of the free market."

The policy change will create more profit opportunities for farmers for both feed and malt barley.

"Farmers will now have an opportunity to sell their barley to the highest bidder on a year-round basis," says Jolly-Nagel. "Under the CWB monopoly, farmers often could not take advantage of world prices, especially in a rising market."

The policy change is also expected to encourage greater growth in western Canadian processing of barley, as has been the case under a free market for oats, canola and pulse crops.

The Wheat Growers had called for Barley Freedom Day to be implemented sooner, however the federal government decided to stick with the August 1 implementation date announced in March.

"We are disappointed," says Jolly-Nagel, "however we respect the government's decision to wait until the start of the crop year."

In a related development, the Wheat Growers are disappointed by yesterday's announcement that a group calling itself "Friends of the CWB" is planning on taking legal action against the federal government's regulatory change. The group, spearheaded by two former CWB employees, intends to challenge the federal Order-in-Council to implement marketing choice on barley.

"It's disappointing that any group would want to stand in the way of higher prices for farmers," says Jolly-Nagel. "Any court decision that overturns or delays a free market in barley would be condemning farmers to yet another year of low barley returns under the CWB monopoly."

"We hope the courts can quickly deal with this legal challenge," says Jolly-Nagel. "so the cloud of uncertainty it creates is removed and farmers can start reaping the full benefits of a free market."

The Wheat Growers are looking forward to celebrating Barley Freedom Day on August 1 and will continue to urge the federal government to move as quickly as possible in implementing a free market in wheat.

For further comment, please contact:

Cherilyn Jolly-Nagel  
President  
Home: (306) 354-2517  
Cell: (306) 354-7368

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