



*For Immediate Release*

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## **Wheat Growers Object to Misuse of Taxpayers Money Against Farmer Interests**

The Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association strongly objects to decisions by the Governments of Saskatchewan and Manitoba to finance a court challenge that has the potential to cost prairie farmers millions of dollars in lost barley revenue.

The Saskatchewan government plans to give \$30,000 to a Winnipeg-based group calling itself "Friends of the CWB", which is launching a legal challenge against the federal Order-in-Council implementing a free market in barley on August 1, 2007. The Manitoba government is also contributing \$20,000 toward the action.

"Why is the Saskatchewan government taking our tax money and giving it to a Winnipeg law firm?" asks Cherilyn Jolly-Nagel, President of the Wheat Growers. "If they have spare money to throw around, they should be spending it on fixing crop insurance, instead of bogus political posturing."

There's already clear evidence that farmers will benefit immensely from a free market in barley. Barley futures prices on the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange have risen dramatically (relative to corn and other crops) since the federal government's March 28 announcement that it would be removing the Canadian Wheat Board's monopoly over barley.

"We're looking forward to finally make some good money growing barley," says Jolly-Nagel. "It's frustrating to see provincial politicians attempting to take that opportunity away, against the expressed wishes of farmers."

In a plebiscite held earlier this year, 62% of western Canadian farmers said they no longer support the CWB monopoly over barley. The results of the plebiscite are consistent with CWB survey results conducted over the past several years.

The Wheat Growers also question the relationship between the Canadian Wheat Board and Friends of the CWB. Friends of the CWB is spearheaded by the CWB's former legal counsel and its former head of communications.

"To what degree are these individuals conspiring with existing Wheat Board staff?" asks Cherilyn Jolly-Nagel. "Farmers deserve answers as to why two ex-CWB employees are now front and center in a legal action attempting to prop up the monopoly."

If the CWB does not voluntarily disclose its association with these two individuals, the Wheat Growers will be seeking information under recently-enacted Access to Information legislation, in full recognition that most interaction is likely untraceable.

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