



**WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION**  
**A strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in western Canada**  
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**For immediate release**

## **CANADIAN BARLEY PLAYERS GIVE THE CWB UNTIL FRIDAY TO ACCEPT DEREGULATION OF BARLEY**

**January 29, 2008 - Ottawa, ON:** Today in Ottawa barley producers attended a meeting strictly on barley hosted by Minister Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri Food. There is a clear consensus among those attending that the government move forward with legislation to end the Canadian Wheat Board's monopoly on barley sales and allow western farmers to sell their crops privately.

Minister Ritz set the tone of the meeting by stating "it's a watershed moment for barley, we must move forward now. The Canadian Government fully supports the rights of barley producers to choose the right to market their barley as they see fit".

"Today's meeting focused on the extreme importance of immediately moving forward with barley choice" states Jeff Nielsen, President of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA). "A resounding NO was sent to CWB representatives Greg Arason and Ward Weisensel on the CWB's *CashPlus* malt barley program. *CashPlus* does not give price transparency, clarity or market signals to malt barley producers. Our industry partners are at serious risk right now as farmers are looking at other crops rather than barley to seed this spring. We can see how the markets work in an open system, we can see strong returns being offered world wide, yet not here in Canada".

In the round table discussions, it was made clear how important a need for resolution is now. Western Canada will not see any new growth in malting capacity until the CWB's control on barley is removed. On maltster even went as far as to say that they intend to build a new facility, yet it won't build it in western Canada.

"This has gone far beyond the CWB designated area now" comments Doug McBain, WBGA Past President and observer at the meeting." By not allowing new growth in value added in malting it affects more than just western Canadian farmers, it affects the economy of Canada as a whole. If we don't see changes now, we risk irreparable harm to our industry, that they may never be able to recover from."

The over whelming consensus of the group is to see a strong vibrant barley sector in western Canada. Without choice we will continue to see barley acres drop, continue to see little or no innovation in developing new markets, new value added and new opportunities for producers to make gains growing barley. Producers are able to contract other crops that have bankable financially secure contracts that can facilitate the needs to purchase the inputs needed to grow this years crops.

WBGA called upon the board of directors of the CWB to debate the changes that are required at this week's board meeting. They received a call by all the attendees to work forward to provide the changes needed and work with all interested parties to move to total deregulation. The CWB has been asked to respond by weeks end.

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