



WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

A strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in western Canada

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For immediate Release -- News Release

WBGA calls on all barley growers to vote by March 13, 2007

March 9, 2007 - Airdrie, AB.: Barley producers are reminded that the time to get your ballot in for the barley plebiscite is close at hand. All ballots must be post marked no later than March 13.

"It is essential that barley producers have their voice heard" states Jeff Nielsen, WBGA President. "Barley producers can see the many opportunities out there for them once the CWB's monopoly on barley is removed. We know the CWB can continue to be one of many marketing options and risk management tools for barley producers. With choice, barley producers will be able to establish viable contracts with end users such as the Canadian Malt industry. This will develop and build strong relations that will be profitable to all parties involved. Our grain handling companies, many Canadian owned and operated also have long term marketing relations with foreign countries/buyers and are eager to continue to build on those relationships".

The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange has and is continuing to developed market options for barley producers to allow them to maximize their returns. These changes, along with the continued strong marketing powers of the CWB, will ensure barley producers have every opportunity to seek a wide array of market and pricing options, for domestic/export feed and malt barley. This will also encourage new development and advancements in barley research, breeding and new use alternatives.

"Even the CWB's own survey in May of 2006 (for barley) showed only 29% supported the CWB monopoly, **46% wanted a choice market environment** and 19% wanted no CWB monopoly" continues Nielsen." this survey asked producers three questions not unlike the current plebiscite is doing!. The CWB currently works domestically with barley in a choice environment, so why not in the malt or export feed market? Fact is out of an average annual crop of 11 million tonnes a year the CWB only handles 1.5 to 2 million tonnes surely choice is not a threat to the operations of the CWB"?

Western Canadian barley farmers are not swayed by the on going fear mongering. " I find it disappointing that although the CWB only handles an average of 15% of the barley crop (mostly malt), some farm groups, individuals and even a provincial government feel that removing barley from the CWB will mean then end of the world. **This plebiscite is on barley not on the future of the CWB**" continues Nielsen. "Barley farmers know what is right, and the ability to market our own barley is essential to our futures".

The Canadian Wheat Board has the expertise and experience to adapt and continue to provide barley producers true marketing choice. WBGA calls on the CWB board of directors to work on behalf of all farmers and put the political rhetoric, grandstanding and continued waste of producers pool accounts monies on legal challenges behind them and do their fiduciary duties. They have been asked to work on a plan that has them working in a choice market with barley, WBGA believes they have one ready that will work for all barley producers. It is time to move forward and encourage more growth and development in barley for, our maltsters, livestock feeding partners, barley fractionation and bio-fuel opportunities. All this will encourage more value added, growth for producers, which ultimately adds value to our rural communities.

WBGA appreciates the continued direction and conviction on choice marketing by Minister Strahl and our Canadian government. For more information on the barley plebiscite go to www.barleyvote.ca

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