



## WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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

Agriculture Centre – 97 East Lake Ramp NE

Airdrie, AB T4A 0C3

Phone: (403) 912-3998

Fax: (403) 948-2069 (Airdrie office)

[www.wbga.org](http://www.wbga.org) Email: [wbga@wbga.org](mailto:wbga@wbga.org)

**For immediate Release**

### **WBGA Questions Liberal Agriculture Critic's Encouragement for Civil Disobedience**

**May 22, 2007 - Airdrie, AB:** Liberal agriculture critic Wayne Easter is calling upon farmers and special interest groups to challenge the federal governments proposed regulatory changes to the marketing of barley through the CWB.

"Although the proposed changes will not remove the right under the CWB Act, of farmers to deliver and sell their barley through the CWB, Mr. Easter is calling upon farmers to legally challenge the new regulations, therefore denying all barley farmers higher returns" states Jeff Nielsen, President of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA). "We are seeing much higher prices this year for barley, both domestically and internationally. The CWB has undersold the current malt barley market, and Mr. Easter is asking farmers to be forced to deliver to the under-price marketing fiasco of the CWB. Yet with the new proposed changes to the CWB marketing of barley, farmers can finally achieve substantial returns by selling their barley to whoever they choose".

The key part of the regulatory changes enforces the right of producers to continue to use the CWB as a marketing agent. This keeps those that want to price pool and have the guarantee of government backing security there for them to use. It is the responsibility of the board of directors of the CWB, and management, to develop a plan to meet the needs of those farmers who wish to continue to use the CWB. This is one key responsibility the board of directors have taken for granted when it comes to barley marketing; evident in the lack of feed barley sales, and the below market pricing of malt barley.

"One of the claimed strengths of the CWB is its reputation and marketing experience, if under proper direction, this could benefit those farmers who wish to use it. WBGA challenges the CWB to actually work and develop a marketing plan for those barley farmers whom still wish to use it to market their barley" remarks Nielsen

"The majority support choice marketing (as the results of the barley plebiscite and CWB surveys show), understand the risks, and want the right to see these rewards of higher returns to our farm gates" continues Nielsen.

"I ask Mr. Easter what is wrong with farmers making a better return from their barley sales. Would this not lead to less dependency on government (taxpayer) adhoc support payments? Would it not encourage growth in our rural communities? Would it not build stronger relations with our processing industries such as the Maltsters? Encouraging farmers to fight farmers is not the Canadian way. We are progressive, adaptive and eager to work towards a better tomorrow for our families, community and country" concludes Nielsen.

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For more information contact:

Jeff Nielsen  
President

Olds, AB  
Phone: (403) 556-3035

Fax: (403) 556-5978  
[jeffniel@platinum.ca](mailto:jeffniel@platinum.ca)  
Tom Hewson  
Vice President

Langbank, SK  
Phone: (306) 538-4572  
[hewws@xplornet.com](mailto:hewws@xplornet.com)