



## WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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

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### CANADIAN FARMERS SET TO REAP BENEFITS AT WTO

**July 22, 2008 – Geneva, Switzerland:** Optimism is in the air, all 30 countries invited to this week's mini ministerial are clearly set to making an aggressive deal. Not only will wheat and barley benefit, but all Canadian grain, pulse, and oilseed farmers stand to make significant gains.

"We are here to strongly encouraging Ministers Ritz and Fortier to increase market access substantially for all of our agricultural exports. We need significant progress in this week's negotiations to end export subsidies reduce domestic support programs. As Canadian farmers, we have suffered for years with artificially low grain prices because of the US and EU farm policies" says Jeff Nielsen, Western Barley Growers Association President who is in Geneva. Nielsen is also Vice President of Grain Growers of Canada who are part of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance delegation.

"It is clear our government needs to be working harder to ensure Canadian producers get the best deal. We know our government is committed on giving wheat and barley producers choice back home which producers have overwhelmingly supported. An aggressive trade deal is vital to the prosperity of Canadian grain, oilseed and pulse producers. Canadian producers do not want to rely on government programs. We need an agreement now, as if this fails, more protectionism and trade barriers will effect all of Canadian agri-business" concludes Nielsen.

#### Comments:

Canada's wheat and barley producers could see significant gains in markets and net returns to the farm gate once a comprehensive deal is reached.

Independent research done by the George Morris centre on all available data shows benefits to producers not only on bound tariffs but applied tariffs as well.

Recent analysis from Alberta Agriculture show if minimum access (tariff quota expansion) is key for market access for products that may be designated sensitive in Europe, Japan and other jurisdictions. This clearly shows positive benefits for Canadian wheat and barley producers.

Over 90% of Canada's agricultural producers depend on exports, with sales of export dependant commodities accounting for \$ 25 billion or 80% of Canada's annual farm gate returns.

Each day without a WTO agreement represents a loss of approximately \$ 10 million in potential exports for Canada's agri – food industry.

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