



## WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Agriculture Centre – 97 East Lake Ramp NE

Airdrie, AB T4A 0C3

Phone: (403) 912-3998 [www.wbga.org](http://www.wbga.org) Email: [wbga@wbga.org](mailto:wbga@wbga.org)

### CWB SURVEY MEANINGLESS AND IRRELEVANT

**AIRDRIE, AB – September 8, 2011:** The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) will release the results of their much publicized nonbinding plebiscite tomorrow. The Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) strongly maintains that the democratic right of farmers to choose who they market their grain to, how much they sell it for and when they sell it should not be put to a vote “Anyone who believes in democracy would not conduct a vote that would allow one farmer to take away the right of another farmer to choose how they market their grain”, says Brian Otto, president of the WBGA.

“The past ten years of CWB surveys have consistently shown that barley producers have wanted an open market for barley and the CWB has consistently ignored the results of these surveys. In the last three years, the CWB surveys have also shown that the majority farmers less than forty years of age want an open market and again the CWB has ignored the results,” states Otto. When the CWB continues to ignore the results of past CWB surveys, why conduct this plebiscite?

“Conducting a plebiscite that will likely attract a very low participation level amongst farmers, demonstrates farmers have moved on. The fact that the voters list was flawed from the start in that it included deceased producers, multiple ballots going out to one farm operation, ballots going out to people who are no longer farming, or going back five years on CWB deliveries for voter eligibility, makes the results meaningless and a tragic waste of farmers money”, exclaims Otto.

Barley producers and the younger farmers who are the future of this industry realize change is needed in the CWB. The WBGA has been hearing from farmers that they need price transparency, clear market signals, the ability to deliver and price their grain to meet the cash flow requirements of their farms. “These changes will occur after August 1, 2012 and farmers can look forward to having the ability to make more reliable business decisions for their farm operations”, comments Otto.

The results of this latest CWB plebiscite are irrelevant. Farmers have said they want an open market that is commercial and competitive and the existing CWB monopoly is preventing this from happening. It is time for the directors of the CWB to quit squandering producer’s money on needless plebiscites and move forward to develop a plan for those producers who want a CWB that will market their grain under a pooling system in an open market. That is what producers expect from their elected directors.

For further comment please contact:

Brian Otto  
President  
Western Barley Growers Association  
(403) 647-7661