



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

www.wbga.org Email: wbga@wbga.org

For Immediate Release

WBGA Applauds Alberta's Support for Barley Freedom

October 2, 2007 ~ Airdrie, AB: An announcement today by Alberta Agriculture and Food Minister George Groeneveld for funding of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) application for intervener status shows once again that the Province of Alberta is fully behind its barley producers. It also shows commitment for all barley producers across western Canada that support choice.

On July 31, the Federal court ruled that the federal government could not remove barley and barley products from the single desk marketing authority of the CWB without parliament's approval. The federal government planned to make the change by regulatory amendment following a springtime plebiscite in which 62 per cent of Western Canada's barley producers voted for market choice. Alberta barley producers voted 78 per cent in favour of market choice.

"With the support of the Alberta government and strong prairie wide barley grower support behind us, we look forward to making our voices heard in the appeal court" stated Jeff Nielsen, WBGA President. "We have asked barley producers across western Canada to sign a barley grower form that will carry significant weight going forward showing how important choice is for these producers net return. Without choice barley farmers continue to see reduced returns, loss of value added and loss of faith in the Canadian Wheat Board" continues Nielsen.

"Marketing choice for barley is essential for our producers," said Brian Otto WBGA board member. "We need the ability to deal directly with our customers and to negotiate for when, where and for how much we sell our crops and valued-added products."

In statements issued after the reversal of barley freedom August 1 of this year, Ken Ritter, chair of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB), stated that the CWB would accelerate barley-marketing options. WBGA questions the CWB's sincerity here, as in over the past 10 years they have done little to improve barley options, and farmer net returns. Since stating that they plan to accelerate these changes - to date - nothing has yet been done.

"Our intervention will balance the views at the appeal. These are actual barley producers, ones that make a significant livelihood from barley production; not a fringe group that want to protect the status quo refusing choice, change and the ability to adapt in an ever changing market. It is time the board of directors of the CWB recognizes the fact that barley producers have requested choice and honour this" concludes Nielsen.

For more information on how to sign a barley producer form please contact the WBGA office or visit wbga@wbga.org

Jeff Nielsen
President ~ WBGA
Olds, AB
Cell: 403.556.0408
jeffniel@platinum.ca

Tom Hewson
Vice President ~ WBGA
Langbank, SK
Phone: 306.538.4572
hewws@xplornet.com

Brian Otto
Director ~ WBGA
Warner, AB
Cell: 403.647.7661
botto@mrcable.ca