



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

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OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### **WBGA SUPPORTS THE BEEF INDUSTRY**

This has been a rough month for the beef industry in Canada, especially in Alberta with the discovery of E. coli in beef shipped from the XL plant at Brooks September 4. Since then the XL plant, which processes nearly 40% of all Canadian cattle has been shut down, putting 2000 XL employees out of work, the beef recall has expanded further and further and the finger-pointing has reached the House of Commons. This is probably the worst time for this recall for farmers as well, with the fall calf sales into feedlots happening now.

The Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) would like everyone to grab some perspective here. Last year in Canada there was another E. Coli problem, which caused one death and 12 people sick, but it wasn't on beef. It was on almonds. The fact is E. Coli can be found on greens and vegetables, unpasteurized milk and fruit juices, meats and in our own gut. Proper cooking and cleaning is essential for safe food preparation no matter how safe the food system is, no matter how many safeguards and HACCP regulations are in place. Our food safety system is the best in the world. We're proud of how Canadian consumers waded through the misinformation during the BSE crisis and supported the beef farmers and their industry in the past.

Mistakes were made at XL, and they will be corrected, making the industry stronger. In the meantime, let's get behind the beef industry in Canada. The farmers that give us the best beef in the world work hard to bring it to consumers as safely and as humanely as possible. Those cattle eat quality inputs that are grown by Canadian farmers who are also proud to bring the safest food in the world to the table. This crisis will pass and our food system will remain as safe as or safer than anywhere in the world. Just remember who this whole recall is hurting the most, and get behind the farmers that are proudly bringing you the safest and some of the cheapest food on earth. They deserve your support.

Western Barley Growers Association is a strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in Western Canada.

Doug Robertson  
President - WBGA