



News Release

For immediate release

Economic Opportunities Growing for Western Barley Farmers

Ottawa, Ontario, December 8, 2011 – Canada's malting industry will continue to work together to boost marketing and competitiveness abroad with the support of the Harper Government. Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced today an investment of over \$575,000 to the Canadian malting barley industry and reiterated the Harper Government's commitment to expanding market opportunities and giving Western Canadian barley farmers the marketing freedom they want and deserve.

"Our Government's top priority remains the economy, and we continue to work hard to expand our markets abroad and invest in innovation here at home to boost our barley farmers' bottom lines," said Minister Ritz in conjunction with the Alberta Barley Commission's Annual General Meeting today in Banff. "Very soon, Western barley farmers will have marketing freedom and control over their own business and our Government is making sure they are in the best position to capture future market opportunities."

This AgriMarketing investment will enable the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre, the Malting Industry Association of Canada and the Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute to maintain existing markets through activities including technical marketing, communications, and the development of a Canadian Malt Barley Brand. The branding will help to highlight Canada's commitment to quality and allow the industry to use a consistent and common marketing strategy with foreign buyers.

The Marketing Freedom for Grain Farmers Act is currently before the Senate Committee. Once it receives royal assent, Western Canadian farmers and grain companies will be able to forward contract their wheat, durum and barley for delivery as of August 1, 2012 whether that's on an open market or voluntarily through the Canadian Wheat Board.

"We are committed to keeping Canada's barley industry strong by helping increase the export of Canada's safe, high-quality products around the world," said Minister Ritz. "Our Government is proud to support the excellent work of these organizations to help get Canada's top-quality barley into products and markets around the world."

Canadian malting barley is known around the world for its high quality and superior characteristics. Canadian exports of malting barley reached more than \$312 million in 2010, accounting for almost a third of all malting barley exports.



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For more information, contact:

Media Relations

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
613-773-7972
1-866-345-7972

Meagan Murdoch

Director of Communications
The Office of the Honourable Gerry Ritz
613-773-1059

BACKGROUNDER

Today's announcement is part of an \$88 million investment provided through the AgriMarketing program under Growing Forward, which helps industry implement long-term international strategies including activities such as international market development, industry-to-industry trade advocacy, and consumer awareness and branding.

Through the AgriMarketing Program, the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre will receive \$390,000, the Malting Industry Association of Canada will receive over \$165,000 and the Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute will receive over \$18,000.

As recipients of AgriMarketing funds, the CMBTC, MIAC and BMBRI will help brand Canadian agricultural products around the world, building greater recognition for the quality, safety advantages and environmental benefits of Canadian products. Tools and promotional items are available to these organizations as registered Canada Brand members to help develop their marketing strategies and activities.

To find out more about the AgriMarketing Program or the Canada Brand international strategy, visit: www.agr.gc.ca/agrimarketing or www.marquecanadabrand.agr.gc.ca.