



News Release

For immediate release

Western Canadian Wheat and Barley Farmers Finally Get Marketing Freedom

Balgonie, Saskatchewan, December 16, 2011 – Western Canadian wheat and barley farmers finally have the freedom to market their wheat or barley as they choose, whether that is with a grain company, processor or the Canadian Wheat Board, following the Royal Assent of the *Marketing Freedom for Grain Farmers Act*. Western farmers, the grain industry, business groups, provincial governments and Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz celebrated this historic day with the signing of the first forward contracts for wheat and barley.

"The *Marketing Freedom for Grain Farmers Act* repositions the entire grain sector for the future - one that is better able to attract investment and allow farm and industry entrepreneurs to seize new markets, increase sales and drive our economy," said Minister Ritz. "Today and every day, the Harper Government is standing up for farmers, delivering on our promises and working with industry to make Canada a better place to live and work."

As of today, Western wheat and barley farmers now have the freedom to forward contract for the delivery of wheat and barley to the Canadian Wheat Board or the buyer of their choice for delivery after August 1, 2012.

With the passing into law of the *Marketing Freedom for Grain Farmers Act*, the first steps are in place to remove the monopoly, unleashing the true economic potential of the prairie grain sector. The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) will be a voluntary marketing option for farmers, supported by the Government as it transitions to a privately owned entity.

"This is a historic day for Western wheat and barley farmers, the grain industry and Canadians," said Parliamentary Secretary David Anderson, Member of Parliament (Cypress Hills – Grasslands). "The Harper Government promised to give Western wheat and barley farmers marketing freedom and we have delivered."

Working with the CWB, farmers, the grain value chain and provincial partners, the Government of Canada is implementing an orderly transition to market freedom which includes a viable, voluntary CWB, as part of an open and competitive Canadian grain market.

Additional information can be found at www.agr.gc.ca/freedom.

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