



WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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For immediate release

CWB DIRECTORS CONTINUE TO ABUSE PRODUCER'S POOLED ACCOUNTS

Airdrie, AB – November 16, 2011: “The Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) strongly opposes the continuing waste of producers’ money by the “farmer-elected directors” pro-monopoly Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) Directors,” said Brian Otto, president of the WBGA today. He is reacting to the Directors travelling to Ottawa at producers’ expense to attempt to stall the passage of ‘Bill C-18 which would create a voluntary CWB. “This is nothing more than political grand standing and these eight directors continue to ignore the fact that the money in the pooled accounts belongs to producers and is not a slush fund to be used by them to make their own political statements,” continues Otto.

“Further to that, I am not sure at the rate they are spending that \$1.4 million CWB Chairman Allen Oberg stated this latest campaign will cost, is going to be enough to cover expenses. Producers had better be prepared for another withdrawal from their pooled accounts before the group of eight are done,” warns Otto. Recent spending on expensive ads on TV especially during primetime NFL broadcasts on Canadian networks, full page newspaper ads in Eastern Canadian urban newspapers and travel and per diem costs for the “group of eight” are the latest spending by these directors. “Instead of marketing farmer’s grain, they are wasting our money promoting their own ideological beliefs. The group of eight continue to show contempt for producers by their cavalier attitude when it comes to using funds from the pooled accounts,” states Otto.

The eight directors continue to point to the flawed plebiscite commissioned by themselves as a level of support from the farmers for their actions. “Nothing could be further from the truth” says Doug McBain, WBGA past president. “The reality is farmers who produce 80% of the barley on the prairies and do not sell to the CWB, did not receive a ballot in this plebiscite. How can the “group of eight” claim that 51% of barley farmers support them?” continues McBain. Claiming that this plebiscite is a credible representation of the opinions of Western Canadian producers is a blatant attempt to mislead the public and an insult to Western Canadian farmers.

The grain industry is already reacting in a positive way to the proposed open market with the announced investments by Rahr Malting and Alliance Grain Traders. As well, there is growing interest by international grain companies throughout the world wanting to establish or expand their operations in Western Canada. There will be more grain companies and grain processors competing for farmer’s grain and that is good for farmers and the Western Canadian economy.

The WBGA believes it is time that for the “group of eight” to quit squandering producer’s money for their own purposes. “The time has come to move forward and prepare for an open market on August 1, 2012,” says Doug Robertson, vice president of the WBGA. Producers and the industry are ready for marketing freedom next August. The only people that do not appear to be ready and refuse to accept the reality that an open market is going to happen, are the “group of eight” and their few followers. This is unfortunate and the cost for producers will continue to grow.

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

For further comment, please contact:

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