



WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

A strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in western Canada

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For Immediate Release

WBGA COMMENT ON ORDER IN COUNCIL EXTENSION

Airdrie, Alberta, December 3, 2014 - The Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) commented publicly today on the extension of the Order in Council (OIC) announced by the Ministers of Transport Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada November 29, 2014. This extends the measures instituted last March 2013, which required the railways to maintain minimum grain volumes delivered to port to clear up the backlog of grain that occurred in the winter of 2013. "We understand the reasoning behind the extension of the OIC, with grain from 2013 still depressing the markets and affected farmer's storage this year," said Doug Robertson, President of the WBGA.

The extension of the OIC to March 28, 2015 was accompanied by set volumes of delivery per week the Railways must meet to avoid fines of up to \$100,000 per violation. "The OIC helped to clear some of the backlog of grain trapped on the Prairies last winter, although it did have unintended consequences", continued Robertson. "Because the Railways focused on moving grain on the East/West corridors, it has made it very difficult for other grains such as oats, malt barley, pulses, and domestic value adding industries that use grains to get access to enough grain railcars to deliver to their customers. We are pleased to see that the extended OIC expects the Railways to supply information on car order fulfillment by corridor, and placement of producer cars along short lines to Quorum, the Monitoring Agency, so we can lessen the impact on shippers in the other corridors. They also have to continue to report on demand and volume, which is something that needs to be maintained in the future. You can't fix what you don't monitor."

The WBGA is also pleased that the government is asking the Railways to submit formal winter contingency plans, including service plans for short line railways and producer car loading sites. "It was not the bad winter or a record crop that caused last year's disastrous shipping season. Failure to plan for periods of potentially harsh conditions in a Canadian winter was at the root of shipping problems last winter. It required an Order in Council to build a sense of urgency among the railways to move grain in volumes that the market demanded. Western Canadian farmers are land locked therefore transportation to market position is critical. The lost delivery opportunities that resulted from poor railway performance is a significant financial loss to farmers" concluded Robertson.

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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