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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**U.S. LOSES AT HIGHEST LEVEL:
TRADE HARASSMENT OF CWB MUST STOP**

SWIFT CURRENT, Sask.—The United States initiated a World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement case against the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) on March 6, 2003. The U.S. claimed that the CWB was an unfair trader and that the Board did not market in a commercial manner. The WTO ruling released today rejects U.S. claims and vindicates the CWB and Canadian farmers. The WTO case was the 11th U.S. attack on the CWB.

“At the ‘supreme court’ of world trade, the U.S. lost its case. The WTO rejected all the charges against the CWB. The U.S. must cease its relentless and costly attacks against Canadian farmers,” said NFU President Stewart Wells. The NFU has, on several occasions, requested that the Canadian government implement Trade Harassment Penalties as part of all existing and future trade agreements.

“Today’s ruling reaffirms, at the highest possible level, that Canadian farmers have the right to decide what kind of marketing system they want in Canada. Canadian farmers have consistently chosen the CWB because it maximizes their returns. Today’s ruling means that they can continue to do so,” said Wells.

Soon after free trade was implemented between Canada and the U.S. in 1989, the U.S. began a series of almost annual attacks on the CWB. “Our governments suggest that one of the primary benefits of trade and investment agreements is that they reduce disputes. Farmers know that the opposite is true,” said Wells.

The Canadian government may have to change a few regulations that are not connected to the operations of the CWB: how the Canadian Grain Commission authorizes U.S. grain to enter Canada, under what circumstances U.S. grain can be mixed with Canadian grain, and how U.S. grain is handled under Canada’s rail transportation Revenue Cap. All three are relatively minor points. “I think that Canada can adjust how it accommodates U.S. grain in Canada. The NFU will work with the Canadian authorities to ensure that Canada’s quality system is not compromised,” said Wells.

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