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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**REGULATIONS MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ALL COSTS OF GM FOODS:  
NFU TELLS FOOD SAFETY CONFERENCE**

**AYLMER, Que.**—NFU President Stewart Wells participated in a Federal conference on food safety regulation in Aylmer, Quebec, May 29-31. The “Consultations on Revisions to Regulatory Directives and Guidelines for Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency” included discussions on the evaluation and regulation of genetically-modified (GM) crops and foods.

Wells told the conference: “The regulatory framework for GM foods and crops needs to be changed to take into account hidden costs.” Existing GM crops and proposed Roundup Ready wheat impose huge costs including agronomic problems for farmers, disrupted crop rotations, and market loss. These crops also threaten to reduce or terminate organic production.

Wells recommended that the Canadian government and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) require management plans from companies developing herbicide-tolerant varieties. Because Roundup Ready crops are resistant to glyphosate, these plants can become weed management problems in the fields of farmers who grow them, as well as for farmers who choose not to grow GM varieties but are victims of genetic pollution. Plants can become resistant to multiple herbicides through “gene stacking.”

Wells concluded: “New Canadian regulations need to be drafted that will stop corporations that develop GM crops from downloading hidden costs onto farmers, consumers, and taxpayers. If these crops create costs—labelling, segregation, market loss, agronomic problems—then the corporations responsible must bear those costs. Mechanisms that ensure that this happens need to be built into new regulations.”

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