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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WESTERN FARMERS CALL ON AGRICULTURE MINISTERS FOR ACTION
ON RAIL TRANSPORTATION AND FLOODED ACRES**

SASKATOON, SK – As the Agriculture Ministers meet in Saskatoon, farmers expressed their discontent in a demonstration and meeting sponsored by the National Farmers Union. The farmers called on the Ministers to act on:

1. Producer Car loading sites being arbitrarily closed by the railways.
2. Excessive freight charges by Canada's two largest railways.
3. CNR and CPR promoting, by their incentive rate structure, the trucking of grain to the mainlines and subsequent abandonment of branch lines.
4. Flooded cropland on the prairies.
5. Intervene in Canada European (CETA) trade agreement negotiations that are threatening farmers' rights to save and reuse seed.

“Farmers turned out today to tell the Federal and Provincial Agriculture Ministers, loud and clear that they are ignoring many important issues that severely impact farmers' bottom lines. Farm families are facing unprecedented debt loads because the two largest railways use legislation and near monopoly power to excessively charge farmers and at the same time decrease service through the closure of producer car loading sites. When you add up inaction by our politicians on these issues and the extreme flooding conditions on the prairies, farmers are facing extremely difficult times”, said Terry Boehm, NFU President.

“It is astounding that in an era of global climate change, governments allow railways to undertake policies that force grain onto the road to be trucked when rail is far more fuel efficient. We are experiencing unprecedented amounts of rain on the prairies and climate change models suggest that global warming will create these wide climatic swings. Meanwhile, the government is allowing policies that create even more greenhouse gases. They could begin to address climate change by standing up for farmers' producer car rights, and fair and equitable rail freight rates”, stated Boehm.

“Farmers contend with many variables but weather like we have seen this spring is making it impossible to adapt to these conditions and that is why we are calling for help”, said Kalissa Regier, NFU Youth President who was also part of today's actions.

“The Ministers must announce immediate assistance for flooded farmers’ fields, and implement transportation policies that protect producers’ railcar loading rights, prevent de-marketing of rail-lines and protect farmers rights to save, reuse, exchange and sell seeds”, concluded Terry Boehm.

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