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national farmers union

In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NFU SAYS CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE TRUSTED

Guelph, Ontario – The National Farmers Union (NFU) is calling on the Harper Conservative government to adhere to its promise to let farmers decide the future of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB). During the election campaign, Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz said that it was up to farmers to decide the future of the CWB. Yesterday Ritz contradicted that position by stating that the Conservative government is going to end the CWB single desk through changes to legislation in the fall. “Clearly the Conservative government cannot be trusted. They say one thing during the election campaign, and do the opposite when the election is over,” stated NFU Region 3 Coordinator Joe Dama.

The operations and future of the CWB are guided by the CWB’s board of directors, the majority of whom are elected by farmers. Ten of the fifteen positions on the board are elected by farmers, while five positions are appointed by the federal government. Director elections are held every two years, for five of the ten farmer-elected positions. Farmers have elected a strong majority of single desk supporters onto the board, in every election. Last fall, farmers elected four out of five pro-single desk supporters onto the Board. Currently eight of the ten farmer-elected directors are pro-single desk supporters.

“The Conservative government needs to respect the director elections, the process through which farmers decide the future of the CWB. The Conservatives are showing contempt towards the farmers who have expressed their views on the board through the director elections, and whose livelihoods are at stake. This is totally unacceptable,” said Dama.

“The Canadian public needs to understand that this government cannot be trusted. They do not respect the views of Canadian citizens. Just yesterday, Harper named to the Senate three of their candidates who were defeated in the federal election. These three candidates were rejected by Canadian voters. To top it off, Harper has railed against the very existence of the Senate many times in the past,” continued Dama.

“Given the way that the Harper Conservatives are going back on their word time-and-again, we can expect that supply management is next. They have said publically that they are not going to touch supply management. But, privately they are in negotiations where getting rid of supply management is on the table, both at the World Trade Organization and with the European Union,” stated Dama.

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