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national farmers union

In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NFU URGES GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT HIGHER CWB INITIAL PRICES

The National Farmers Union (NFU) wants the federal government to immediately raise Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) initial prices.

In a letter to Hon. Reg Alcock, Minister Responsible for the CWB, NFU President Stewart Wells says the Canadian government has set initial prices “unnecessarily low” and is creating undue hardship for western Canadian farmers. Wells said producers are already devastated by high input costs, corporate concentration and historically low grain prices.

The NFU President said higher initial prices are justified given that over 70 percent of the current year’s harvest is in the bin and we are now over two months into the marketing year. “There is much new information available that was not known last July, and based on these circumstances, the federal government should immediately move to raise initial prices,” he said.

Wells said the Canadian government must not force farmers to bear the brunt of concessions made at the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations. “It appears we are witnessing another example of Canadian farm families being sacrificed at the international altar of the WTO,” he said.

In July, 2004, the Canadian government offered to end government guarantees on CWB initial prices and CWB borrowings. “This ill-advised concession has placed the CWB, and by extension, Canadian farmers, at severe risk,” he pointed out.

Wells said by setting initial prices unnecessarily low, the government is operating as if government guarantees on CWB initial prices and CWB borrowings have already been eliminated. He urged the government to demonstrate its commitment to both the CWB and to farmers by immediately raising CWB initial prices.

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