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**national farmers union**  
*In Union Is Strength*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NFU URGES ELECTORAL REVIEW TO RETAIN DEMOCRATIC BALLOTING**

The National Farmers Union (NFU) is urging the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) Electoral Review Panel to reject any notion of a “weighted ballot” system.

The CWB Electoral Review Panel, made up of Greg Porozni of Alberta, David Rolfe of Manitoba and Cecilia Olver of Saskatchewan, was appointed last June by Hon. Reg Alcock, Minister Responsible for the CWB. September 30 was the final day for submissions to the Electoral Review panel.

The NFU made its initial presentation to the panel in Saskatoon August 17. In its second submission to the Panel, the NFU expressed concern that any move toward a “weighted ballot” which favours larger operators will undermine basic democratic principles.

NFU President Stewart Wells said the vast majority of farmers across western Canada support the principle of one person – one vote. He said if a weighted ballot along the lines of the proposal advanced by the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association (WCWGA) was adopted, it would effectively disenfranchise tens of thousands of farmers by making their votes worth less than their larger neighbours.

“If ballots were distributed based on tonnes delivered to the CWB, for instance, half the ballots would go to about 8% of CWB permit book holders, and the remaining 92% of permit book holders would share the other half of the ballots,” said Wells. He noted that if this principle was applied to municipal elections in urban centres, ballots would be based on the value of your house.

“This type of so-called democracy based on wealth and privilege was a concept from the middle ages and was outmoded by the nineteenth century,” he said. “Far from being an innovative or modern concept, the weighted ballot is an anachronism which has long since been discarded by all democratic nations.”

Along with its brief, the NFU submitted an appendix of 37 documents containing extensive correspondence undertaken by the organization on the issue of the CWB structure, governance and election process for Board of Directors.

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