

National Office  
2717 Wentz Ave.  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
S7K 4B6  
Tel (306) 652-9465  
Fax (306) 664-6226  
E-Mail: [nfu@nfu.ca](mailto:nfu@nfu.ca)



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NFU LEADERS SPEAK AT FARMERS' SOLIDARITY RALLY IN OTTAWA**

OTTAWA – Members of the National Farmers Union (NFU) “stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with farmers across the country,” says NFU President Stewart Wells.

Wells and NFU Women’s President Colleen Ross were among the speakers at the Solidarity Rally in the nation’s capital April 5. The rally attracted an estimated 10,000 farmers from across the country.

Following the rally, Wells and Ross remained in Ottawa to hold meetings with Agriculture Critics and ministerial officials from all parties.

Ross told the crowd at the rally that while farmers are suffering record losses in net farm income, corporate agribusiness is making record profits. “There is money being made in agriculture, but the market isn’t paying farmers for what they do,” she stated. A study on levels of corporate profits is available from the NFU website at [www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca)

Wells said farmers strive to earn sufficient returns from the marketplace through supply-management agencies and the Canadian Wheat Board. He noted the CWB puts “more than a million dollars a day extra into the pockets of western Canadian farmers.”

But the high level of corporate concentration has skewed the marketplace so badly that a majority of farmers have very little economic power. “When the marketplace won’t work, farmers must turn to government” for help, said Wells. “It’s important to remember that during the election campaign, the Conservatives promised a support program that addressed farmers’ cost of production. Over the next couple of months we’re going to hear a lot about ‘accountability’ from this government. Well, accountability starts here and starts today.”

Wells concluded that farmers shouldn’t be distracted by promises that World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations will bring relief. “There is nothing in the WTO for the farmers of Canada,” he said. “We’ve been hearing WTO promises for over 20 years, and in those two decades, an entire generation of farmers was born and grew up and has left the farm.”

In fact, he said, WTO negotiations are currently focused on “cutting Canadian domestic programming by up to 40 percent, and eroding supply-management and the CWB.” He

warned that there are people in this government who are intent on “using the WTO to kill the CWB marketing advantage and taking that million dollars a day extra out of farmers’ pockets.”

He concluded that “Canadian consumers enjoy the food that Canadian farmers produce, but we need to be paid for what we do.”

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Contact:        Stewart Wells, NFU President (306) 741-7694  
                     Colleen Ross, NFU Women’s President (613) 652-1552  
                     Terry Pugh, NFU Executive-Secretary (306) 652-9465