

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



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 30, 2006**

## **STRAHL TELLS FARMERS TO “BUCK UP”, NO CAIS REPLACEMENT**

The President of the National Farmers Union (NFU) says farmers across the country are disappointed and discouraged by recent statements by the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food in regards to the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program.

At a meeting in Yorkton March 23, which was broadcast nation-wide this week on the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC), Strahl seemed to admit the federal government had backed away from its campaign promise to scrap CAIS and replace it with a new program that would take into account farmers' costs of production.

Strahl stated at the meeting:

“We can't do anything, I don't think, fast enough, that would get us out of the program and into something else that's going to meet any needs...”

“That's why I'm encouraging farmers, just...to **Buck up and get into the program (CAIS) and get what you can out of it while we devise something new...**”

“We've campaigned on replacing CAIS, and so that doesn't sound like building on the old program... (however) if we gave notice today, it would be the 2009 crop year before we could get out (of CAIS)...”

Wells said the Minister's remarks indicate a “complete turnaround from the plan presented by the Conservatives during the election period.” He quoted the Conservative election platform, which stated: “A Conservative government will replace CAIS with a new income stabilization program that is simpler and more responsive. We will ensure that it **properly addresses the cost of production**, market revenue, and inventory evaluation.”

Wells concluded that the Minister's message is not particularly inspirational or helpful at this time, especially when coupled with the message that the Conservatives will continue to try to kill the marketing advantage of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB). “The CWB puts up to \$2 million per day extra into the pockets of Canadian farmers, and this money comes from the marketplace,” he said. “Killing marketplace revenue (CWB) and replacing it with taxpayer revenue (CAIS) is a huge step backwards for Canadian farmers and taxpayers.”

The NFU has raised the “cost of production” plan during meetings with the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food on three separate occasions since the federal election in January, including a letter sent on March 9, 2006. A copy of the letter is available upon request to the NFU office.

- 30 -

Contact:        Stewart Wells, NFU President (306) 773-6852 or (306) 741-7694  
                     Terry Pugh, NFU Executive-Secretary (306) 652-9465