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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG MINISTER USING DISCREDITED QUOTE TO ATTACK CWB

“Federal Agriculture Minister Chuck Strahl and other government MPs are using a discredited quote from an American lobby group in an attempt to undermine the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB),” says Stewart Wells, President of the National Farmers Union (NFU). “It is a disgrace that the so-called accountability act doesn’t stop Harper’s MPs from telling whoppers.”

In a radio interview in Alberta last week, Strahl claimed Algeria is buying durum wheat from the CWB “cheaper than ...anywhere else.” The source of the allegation is a newsletter published by US Wheat Associates (USWA) dated December 28, 2006, which quoted an Algerian government official as stating that country pays “very low prices” for Canadian durum. The quote has been repeated by the Western Barley Growers Association and Conservative MP Garry Breitkruez.

USWA has since admitted it was factually incorrect. In a letter to CWB CEO Greg Arason, and posted on the USWA website, **USWA President Alan Tracy stated: “We agree that the translation we used originally was inaccurate, and we apologize to Mr. Kacem (the Algerian official) for quoting him incorrectly.”**

NFU President Stewart Wells says the federal government should immediately stop using discredited allegations in its anti-CWB campaign.

“The commercial relationship between the CWB and Algeria is based on a number of important factors including quality assurance, reliability of supply, technical support and mutual trust developed over the last thirty-five years,” stated Wells. “Harper’s government has shown that it will say or do anything in order to destroy the marketing advantages of the Canadian Wheat Board, and now this includes destroying important international relationships with Canada’s customers.”

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