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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE REAL CHOICE FOR WESTERN CANADIAN FARMERS

“The power of the single desk is magnified in times of tight supply. We are seeing that right now with the Canadian Wheat Board’s (CWB) single desk selling of durum wheat on behalf of western Canadian farmers,” said Stewart Wells, President of the National Farmers Union (NFU).

Wells was referring to the beneficial impact of a rising market in durum. The CWB released its latest Pool Return Outlook (PRO) October 25 which showed the estimated return for Number 1 Canadian Western Amber Durum (CWAD) with 12.5% protein is \$12.71 per bushel. When freight and handling charges are deducted, the farm gate price is still over \$11 per bushel.

“So this means that a Canadian farmer selling durum through the CWB in August, 2007 will receive about \$11 a bushel at the farm gate for durum, while our US colleagues were selling their durum for less than \$7,” Wells stated. Despite rising prices in the US, most American farmers sold their grain in August at prices well below the peak. Even the North Dakota Wheat Commission admitted August 30 that very few farmers were able to sell their durum for even \$8 per bushel [Farm and Ranch Guide, August 30, 2007].

“This huge difference is strictly a result of the single desk selling advantage, which provides independent market intelligence, orderly marketing, and price discrimination for Canadian grain. These are all advantages that the Harper government will destroy if they are successful in destroying the single desk selling advantages of the CWB.”

Wells said there is a clear-cut choice facing farmers: “You can have \$11 per bushel durum (while your US colleagues are selling for less than \$7), OR you can let the Harper MPs destroy the CWB. There is no compromise position. Without the single desk there is no extra \$4 per bushel.”

Wells concluded the agenda of the Harper Government is to undermine barley marketing first, and then move to destroy the single desk selling advantage for wheat and durum.

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