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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INTERESTING RESULTS IN CWB PRODUCER SURVEY

The National Farmers Union (NFU) agrees with the optimism expressed by farmers in the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) annual producer survey. “Grain prices have improved, and that is helping farmers plan for the future,” says Stewart Wells, President of the NFU. “However, farmers also recognize that their costs have increased significantly. The economic benefits they have seen so far are resulting from last year’s production based on last year’s costs.”

Of particular interest are the responses indicating that only 12% of the farmers said that Gerry Ritz’s views were “very close” to their own. Ritz’s numbers compare unfavourably to the CWB’s numbers on the same question, when 31% of the farmers said that the CWB’s views were “very close” to their own.

“It is clear that the farmers see the CWB as a much more reliable and trustworthy partner than Gerry Ritz on matters of grain policy and marketing,” said Wells.

“It is also interesting to see that the majority of farmers would have preferred that the government drop the issue of barley marketing after the government’s losses in the Federal Court, and that most farmers would have preferred that the government not introduce legislation. This helps explain the Conservatives’ half-hearted attempt to pass a motion in the House of Commons today that would have sent their CWB Bills directly to the Agriculture Committee. Only a fraction of the Conservative MPs were in the House for the vote on their own motion,” continued Wells.

One question was conspicuous by its absence. “It would have been nice to see the CWB ask farmers whether or not the government should be responsible for paying former CWB President Adrian Measner’s severance package. The government created this cost for farmers, but the government is making farmers pay for the government’s action of firing Mr. Measner without cause. This is nothing short of stealing from farmers,” concluded Wells, “and the farmers know it.”

The NFU concluded by urging farmers to obtain a copy of the survey results and to interpret the results for themselves. The survey is available online at the CWB website.

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