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**national farmers union**

***In Union Is Strength***

MARCH 20, 2008

*Stewart Wells, President of the National Farmers Union, today issued the following statement on the issue of confidentiality of farmers' business transactions:*

**Minister abusing his position by demanding confidential information on farmers**

“The federal government’s attacks on farmers who support the Canadian Wheat Board have reached a new low. In the House of Commons last week (March 13), it was revealed that Minister of Agriculture Gerry Ritz has been asking the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) to supply him with private and confidential information regarding farmers who sell grain through the CWB.

“The immediate question that comes to mind is “What would the Minister do with private information about farmers who are selling grain through the CWB?” The unsatisfactory answer is “What would the Minister of Health do with an individual’s private medical records, or what would the Minister of Finance do with an individual’s private tax returns?”

“There are reasons why private information is deemed to be private; there are reasons that in Canada we have a law—the Privacy Act of 1983—that guarantees the privacy of personal information.

“Like all Canadians, farmers want fairness, democracy, the rule of law, and the ability to direct our own future. This government has given us rigged plebiscites, illegal Cabinet Orders, gag orders, abuse of power, firings without cause, election tampering, and now invasion of privacy. All Canadians should be worried and speaking out.”

- 30 -

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