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national farmers union

In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CFIA CUTS FARMERS OUT OF SEED MEETING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is effectively cutting farmers out of discussions about one of the most fundamental pieces of agriculture, namely control of seed.

Terry Boehm, Vice-President of the National Farmers Union (NFU), said the CFIA recently made changes to how varieties of crops are registered in Canada. “These changes were made over the summer months, when farmers were extremely busy,” he said. “The CFIA created a three-part system for variety registration, and the overall effect of these changes will be detrimental to farmers.”

Boehm said under Part 3 of the changed system, for example, independent testing of new seed varieties is eliminated. The revised system would also allow new varieties to be registered very quickly under Part 3, and speeded up under Part 2. This would effectively open the door to rapid introduction of genetically-modified (GM) crop varieties.

Boehm says the changes were made without the knowledge of most farmers. Now, the CFIA is convening a meeting in Ottawa on October 28 to discuss the mechanics of how crop kinds like wheat, and many others, will be placed in the three-part registration system.

“However, the CFIA is refusing to help farmers with their travel expenses to attend that meeting,” he stated. “This is unacceptable. Farmers need to be at the table. Control of seed and what kind of seed is available is fundamental to farmers and agriculture. With this move, the CFIA is cutting farmers out.”

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