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**national farmers union**

***In Union Is Strength***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ALL-CANDIDATES FORUM ON AGRICULTURE SLATED FOR OCTOBER 3**

An all-candidates forum on agriculture is scheduled for Friday, October 3 at the Dunvegan Motor Inn in Fairview, Alberta. The forum will begin at 7:00 PM.

Sponsored jointly by the National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Council of Canadians – Peace Region Chapter, the public forum offers farmers and urban people an opportunity to question federal candidates on their parties' food and agricultural policies.

Neil Peacock, NFU Board Member for the Peace River region of Alberta and BC, said the forum is particularly relevant in light of recent food safety concerns in Canada and abroad. He noted that while family farm agriculture is a valuable part of the Peace River region's economy, it is often overlooked in the course of election campaigns.

"Family farmers need a new direction for agricultural policy – one that offers A Better Canadian Direction – or ABCD," stated Peacock.

Invitations to address the public forum were extended to candidates from all political parties.

Confirmation of attendance has so far been received from New Democratic Party candidate Adele Boucher Rymhs, Liberal Party candidate Lilliane Maisonneuve, Green Party candidate Jennifer Villebrun and Libertarian Party candidate Melanie Simard. An invitation has also been extended to the Canadian Action Party candidate Edwin Sigglekow. The incumbent MP, Conservative Party candidate Chris Warkentin, has declined the invitation.

Peter Eggers, NFU Coordinator for the Peace River region, expressed thanks to those candidates who have agreed to participate in the debate. He said their attendance indicates they place a high priority on agriculture and food issues.

NFU Board member Neil Peacock was disappointed the Conservative candidate chose not to bother coming. "This election is supposedly about leadership and judgment. I find it ironic that Mr. Warkentin would rather attend a function promoting equipment from a manufacturer that recently laid off in excess of 1,000 workers at their manufacturing plant in Ontario, rather than meet with local farmers and hear their views and concerns. This certainly seems indicative of his and his party's priorities."

Issues that will be raised at the forum include: food safety, the Canadian Wheat Board, WTO and other international trade deals, input costs, support programs, supply-management, Canada Post privatization, and energy.

The NFU is a non-partisan, direct-membership family farm organization. The Council of Canadians is a civil society organization whose objectives include protecting and promoting Canadian sovereignty and democracy.

The public is encouraged to attend the forum.

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