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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NFU TAKES MAILING LIST QUESTIONS TO RCMP

The National Farmers Union has asked the RCMP to conduct an investigation into the practices of five Conservative MPs in regards to the round of Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) elections held in late 2008.

During the recent CWB Director elections, five Conservative MPs used taxpayers' money to try and get anti-CWB candidates elected. The Conservative MPs sent letters directly to farmers telling them how to vote and who to vote for. As well, it seems that the mailing list used by the Conservative MPs was identical to the CWB voters' list.

According to the law, the CWB election voters' list is only supposed to be available to the candidates involved, and there are strict rules in place to ensure the proper use of the private information contained in the voters' list.

“There have been several conflicting stories coming from the Conservative MPs themselves regarding the mailing list that they used to promote anti-CWB candidates during the election,” said Stewart Wells, President of the National Farmers Union. “Given that it is an offence under the *CWB Act* to break the *CWB Act* or its regulations, it seems that the only way to get to the truth is to ask the RCMP to investigate, and that is what we have done.”

“It seems to us that the first step of an investigation would be to establish whether or not the CWB voters' list was actually used by the Conservative MPs. Farmers are angry about the abuse of democracy by the Conservatives, and farmers have sent over fifty of the letters to the National Farmers Union. It appears that in every case the name and address on the MP's letters is identical to the name and address in the farmer's CWB permit book—including typos and corporate names. The information in the CWB permit book is also supposed to be protected by Canada's Privacy Act of 1983,” continued Wells.

Besides the voters' list issue, there are other outstanding problems with the Conservative MPs' actions, including their violation of the MPs' Conflict of Interest Code. According to the MPs' Code, MPs are not supposed to help their friends become “...a director or officer in a corporation, association or trade union...”

As well, the Conservative MPs have refused to register as third party intervenors, an action that shows they think they are above the laws that apply to other Canadians.

“The National Farmers Union expects accountability from all MPs, right from the Prime Minister down to the loneliest backbencher, and we are hopeful that the RCMP can help provide some of the accountability that is being denied by the Conservative MPs,” concluded Wells.

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