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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**JUNE 11, 2009**

**NFU BRIEFS FEDERAL AG. COMMITTEE  
OFFERS CHILLING ANALYSIS OF FARM CRISIS  
AND PROMISING SOLUTIONS**

**OTTAWA, Ont.**—According to Agriculture Canada and Statistics Canada, over the past 24 years, input suppliers have captured 99.6% of the wealth generated on Canadian land.

Farmers have produced and sold an overall average \$388 per acre per year. But farmers have been forced to make due with just \$1.45 per acre per year (overall Canadian average) in the form of net income from the markets—government payments excluded.

The corporations that provide farm inputs and services—fertilizer and chemical companies, banks, etc.—captured the other \$386 per acre. The share of the wealth flowing to farm input and service corporations is *266 times* larger than the share that stays on family farms. (All figures adjusted for inflation.)

NFU Women's President and Ontario farmer Colleen Ross and NFU Saskatchewan Coordinator and farmer Glenn Tait appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture this morning. Tait and Ross discussed with MPs the competitiveness of various agricultural and food sectors, as well as the declining level of competition among the dominant players in many of those sectors; MPs are preparing a report on competitiveness and competition. The NFU also presented a new analysis of net farm income, and a set of steps that could rapidly and affordably increase farmers' incomes. Ross and Tait outlined just how much money is being captured by fertilizer and fuel companies and other agribusinesses, and just how little is realized by farmers.

The NFU officials presented a nine-page analysis to MPs entitled *Canada's Farm and Food Sectors, Competition and Competitiveness, and a Path Out of the Net Farm Income Swamp*. For more details on the numbers above, and for additional information, please see that report, available under the "Briefs and Policy" tab at [www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca) .

In addition to laying out the severity and causes of the two-and-a-half decade old farm crisis, the NFU brief laid out several solutions, including curbing agribusiness mergers, banning captive supply among beef packers, and rolling back farmer-impoverishing seed patenting and use restrictions. The NFU recommendations to the MPs concluded with a call to reconstruct Canadian agriculture and food policies on the basis of Food Sovereignty.

Food Sovereignty focuses on maximizing the profitability, diversity, sustainability, democracy, and fairness of food systems and their effectiveness in actually feeding people and communities—locally, regionally, and globally. It does so by taking seriously the needs of local producers, landscapes, and communities and democratically empowering people to shape the food systems that will serve them best. It allows trade, but puts it in a secondary or tertiary position, not as a top priority as does the current WTO model. Trade is returned to its proper category: means, not end. And food production is seen, first, as a way of feeding peoples and cultures, and only secondarily as a commodity for speculation, trade, and profit.

“Pursuing Food Sovereignty re-empowers farmers and local communities. In so doing, it restores Canadian farmers’ capacities to hold onto a fair and adequate portion of the hundreds-of-billions-of-dollars worth of food they produce. Pursuing Food Sovereignty will end the family farm income crisis. Continuing down the current path will end the family farm,” concluded the NFU report to MPs.

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