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**national farmers union**  
*In Union Is Strength*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NOVEMBER 4, 2009**

**NFU URGES AMENDMENT TO CTA TO PROTECT FARMERS' RIGHT TO LOAD PRODUCER CARS AT DESIGNATED RAILWAY SIDINGS**

The National Farmers Union (NFU) is calling on the federal government to amend the *Canada Transportation Act* (CTA) to prevent railways from arbitrarily delisting producer car loading sites.

At a recent meeting of the NFU Executive in Saskatoon, a resolution was adopted stating that delisting producer car loading sites should not be left to the railways' sole discretion. Earlier this fall, CN Rail indicated it intends to delist 53 producer car loading sites. Terry Boehm, NFU Vice-President, said the current process for delisting sites gives all the power to the railways, and effectively removes farmers' historic right to load producer cars because it would deny them access to facilities.

The resolution adopted at the NFU Executive meeting reads as follows:

“WHEREAS Canadian National Railway is now using the number of cars shipped from a siding as a gauge for deciding on that siding's closure or retention, and

WHEREAS this proposal is wholly inappropriate because it would allow the railways to violate the spirit and the intent of the *Canada Grain Act*, which fundamentally protects farmers' historic right to load producer cars, and

WHEREAS the use of producer cars is a competitive measure to keep elevation and handling charges under control, and to give farmers convenient and fair access to rail transport. When the possibility of producer cars disappears, these charges will escalate rapidly, and rail access for farmers will be severely crippled. Further, railways are attempting to destroy a measure that was put in place to curb their power.and

WHEREAS shipping grain by rail, rather than by truck, will minimize greenhouse gas emissions and help mitigate the negative effects of climate change,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU urge that the *Canada Transportation Act* (CTA) be amended to disallow the closure of sidings at the railways' sole discretion.”

The resolution supplements existing NFU Policy on the subject of producer cars and loading sites, adopted in 2000: *“In addition to an adequate branchline network, railway sidings are vital to farmers, especially those who load producer cars. For this reason, the NFU demands that:*

*a) The CTA be amended to include provisions that require railways to sell sidings to the federal government for salvage value, and that,*

*b) The CTA establish a process whereby farmers and others can obtain permits to build sidings along railway lines. (Nov 2000)”*

Boehm urged farmers across the prairie region to contact Rob Merrifield, the Minister of State for Transport (613-992-1653 or e-mail [MerriR@parl.gc.ca](mailto:MerriR@parl.gc.ca)); Members of Parliament; and also to contact the Canadian Transportation Agency (1-888-222-2592 or [info@otc-cta.gc.ca](mailto:info@otc-cta.gc.ca)), or write to: Canadian Transportation Agency, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N9) to urge that these amendments be made to the *Canada Transportation Act*.

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