



The Canadian Wheat Board
La Commission canadienne du blé



October 26, 2006

The Honourable Chuck Strahl, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and
Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Sir John Carling Building
930 Carling Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

SENT VIA FAX

Dear Minister Strahl:

Re: October 5, 2006 Directive

We received the above noted Order in Council on October 6, 2006 and were immediately perplexed by two fundamental questions: 1) What does it mean? and 2) What is its purpose?

As an organization, we believe in the rule of law and commit to uphold the laws of our country; however, we find this order to be vague, imprecise and open to a wide variety of interpretations. This lack of clarity leaves the CWB vulnerable to unfair allegations of flouting the order. In your comments around the order you have clarified it to a degree; however, in many daily circumstances and situations, its application is vague and unknown.

More importantly, what is its purpose? The CWB is a single desk grain marketing entity under the laws of our country. For us to deny our essence would be to deny reality. We are not an agent of the government or a crown corporation; rather, we are a shared governance corporation in which the roles of the board of directors and the government are clearly spelled out.

In our view, the spirit and intent of the CWB Act changes of 1998 were to turn over the control and direction of the CWB from government to farmers. Two specific legitimizing vehicles were set out to accomplish this: the election of 10 directors to the board in a staggered rotation; and a prairie-wide producer plebiscite in the event of a contemplated CWB mandate change.

As an organization and as farmers, we respect these two statutory democratic processes, and we hereby ask our shared governance partner to do the same.

We are presently in an election period, where numerous candidates in odd numbered districts are running for election. During this period, the CWB will not promote the single desk, since all candidates have a right to put their credentials and their vision of the future of the CWB to eligible voters. On December 1, 2006 the election period ends, votes are counted and those who are successful will take office on December 31, 2006. Our view is that the future strategic direction of the CWB must reflect the will of farmers and the election results; otherwise, what is the purpose of the elections?

Accordingly, I am respectfully asking you to request that the Governor General in Council rescind the Order in Council dated October 5, 2006 at the earliest possible date. This will allow all democratically elected directors to fully express their views without fear of reprisal and will enable the CWB to fully implement the democratic will of the farmers of Western Canada.

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Admittedly, the CWB is a unique entity in law, but one thing is very clear. Farmers have been given a defined democratic right to chart their grain marketing future through the director election process or a prairie-wide plebiscite.

We again would like to extend our sincere wish to work with you to fully implement farmers' democratic will as contemplated by the CWB Act.

Additionally, while the board of directors believes the order should be rescinded, it has discharged its obligations under Section 18 (1.1) of the Act and caused the directions to be implemented.

Sincerely,

Ken Ritter
Chair, Board of Directors

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c: Mr. Laurie Throness, Chief of Staff