



For Immediate Release September 22, 2004

Chamber Renews Support for Dual Desk Marketing.

Prairie grain growers and food processors have gained renewed energy in a bid to break the Canadian Wheat Board's stranglehold on markets for export-quality wheat and barley.

Delegates from Chambers of Commerce across Canada voted strongly Monday in support of a policy that would let grain producers choose whether or not to sell their grain through the CWB marketing pool.

"The Red Deer Chamber, with support from Calgary and Regina, updated the 2003 policy and brought it back to the table because we believe the Wheat Board's mandate discourages economic growth," said Tom Langford, president of the Red Deer Chamber.

Food processors across the Prairies miss out on billions of dollars in potential revenue because CWB rules prevent them from buying directly from local farmers, said Langford.

He cited a George Morris survey from 2003, which discovered Canadian Wheat Board losses of \$86 million when removing the monopoly could stimulate a grains-based value-added industry worth up to almost \$3 billion in revenue.

"This is not just about farmers. This is about changing an archaic law to stimulate prosperity and generate jobs in a society that places high value on a free and open marketplace."

As a result of Monday's vote, the Canadian Chamber will take two recommendations to the federal government, aimed at stimulating grain-based, value-added business development in Western Canada:

1. Immediately adjust legislation to provide Western Canadian farmers and value-added processors the voluntary option to participate in the CWB, and
2. Immediately introduce Canada's free market principles into Western Canada's wheat and barley industry.

President Langford will be available for media interviews following the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting at the Black Knight Inn on Wednesday, Sept. 22 at 11:45 a.m. Further information is available from the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce, 403-347-4491.