



Minister's Statement

For immediate release

MINISTER RITZ APPEALS COURT DECISION ON MARKETING CHOICE FOR BARLEY

BALGONIE, Saskatchewan, August 30, 2007 – The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, today issued the following statement regarding the Government of Canada's decision to appeal a Federal Court ruling on July 31, 2007, in which it overturned new Canadian Wheat Board Regulations that would have allowed Western Canadian farmers to choose how they market their barley beginning August 1, 2007.

"Canada's New Government is committed to working for farmers and farm families. During the election and since coming to office, we have heard Western Canadian grain producers tell us clearly that they want more choice and alternatives to the single desk of the Canadian Wheat Board. That is why I am proud to announce our government's decision to appeal the Federal Court decision.

"We know a significant majority of barley producers had been looking forward to making their own marketing decisions on August 1, and were disappointed with the Federal Court decision that maintains the single desk of the Canadian Wheat Board.

"Unlike our predecessors, this government listens and respects the will of farmers. We even asked Western Canadian grain farmers to express their views in a plebiscite that was held earlier this year. Nearly 30,000 Western barley farmers voted in this fair process and the majority, 62 percent, told us they wanted to decide how to market their own product.

"Today's appeal is the right thing to do for farmers and farm families. Canada's New Government remains committed to providing marketing choice to Western grain farmers, while continuing to preserve a strong Canadian Wheat Board."

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